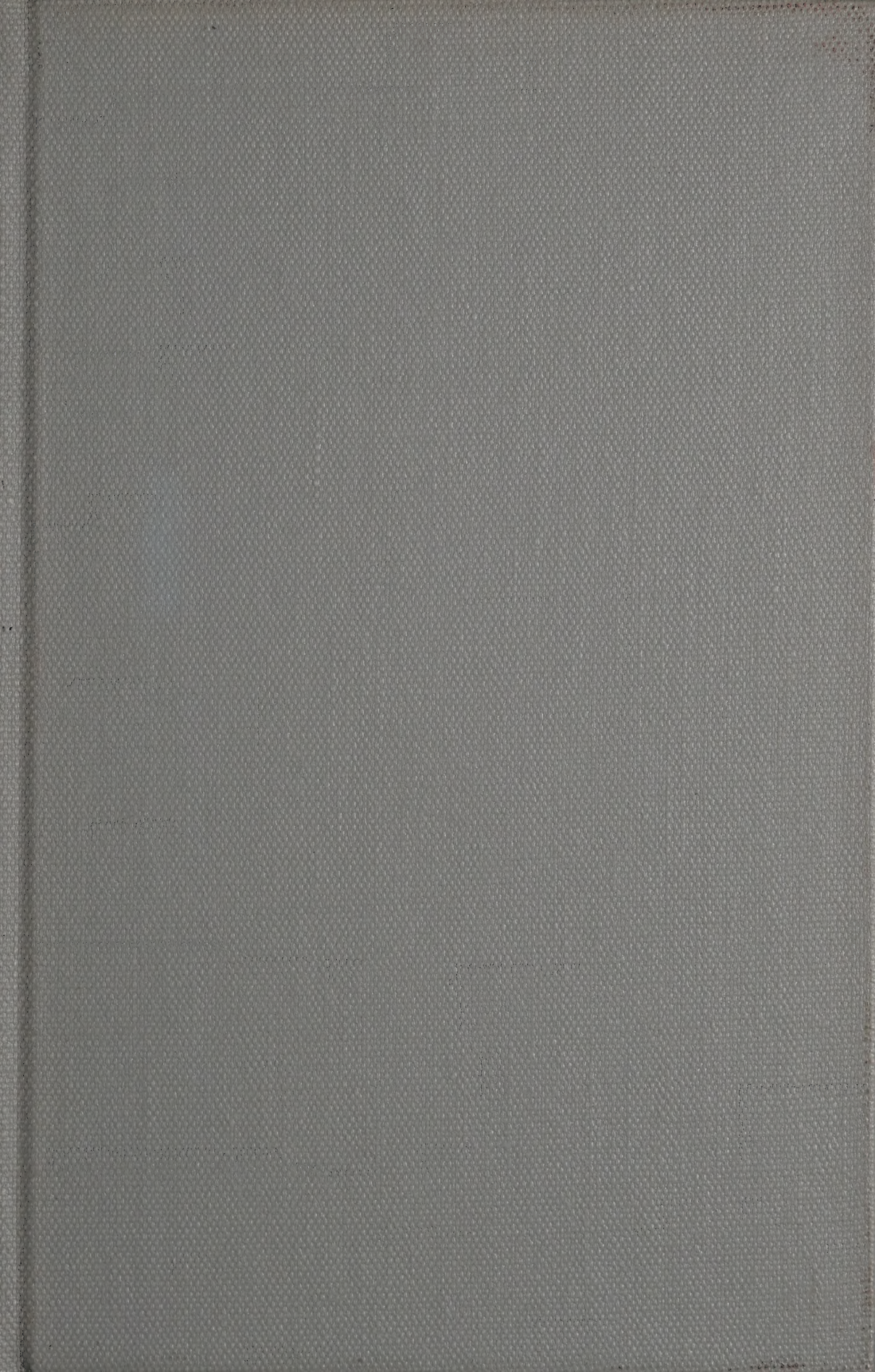


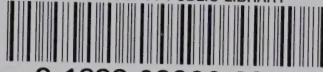


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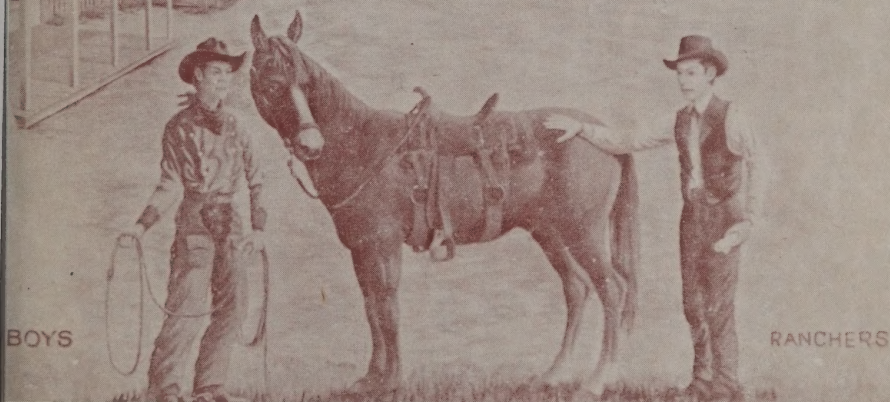
Diamond Jubilee

1886 - 1961

ROMANTIC OLD ODESSA

1886

1924



BOYS

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FOREWORD

W. M. Hoim, President, Texas Permian Historical Society
*Odessa, Texas, U. S. A., was founded in 1886. The promoter of the
 site proposed to make Odessa a health resort and educational
 center where the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors would be
 forbidden. History has largely vindicated them. Odessa has always been
 a healthy place to live and with the establishment of Odessa College in 1946,
 has become an educational center. However, it is only fair to point out
 that intoxicating liquor is for available medicinal purposes.*

*This year we are observing our 75th Anniversary of progress and grati-
 tude. We are thankful for the tremendous progress our city has made and
 grateful to those farsighted and courageous pioneer who made it possible.
 The Texas Permian Historical Society was organized in 1958 to pre-
 serve the history of the Permian Basin Area of West Texas. It serves
 Ector, Andrews, Crane, Ector, Loving, Ward and Winkler. Other
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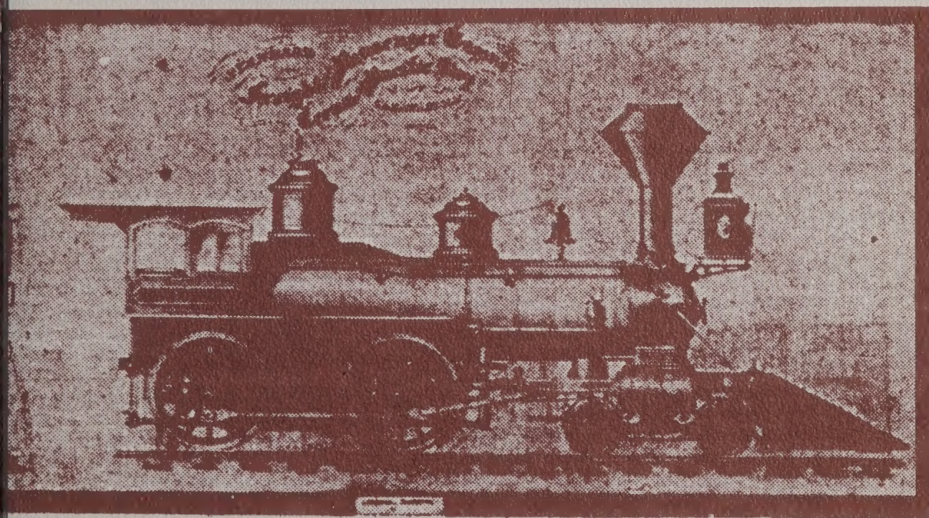
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FIRST TRAIN—This locomotive is the type used by the Texas & Pacific Railway when it first came through Odessa in 1881. The railroad played an important part in the establishing of the town. The locomotive pictured above was built in 1872.

EARLY TRAILS THROUGH ECTOR COUNTY

By Grace Thorman King

Citizens traversing Ector County's network of modern highways, flying in jet planes, and riding streamlined trains are not the first to traverse its terrain. The first record of explorer-pioneer trails that have covered portions of Ector County occurred in 1650 when General Hernando de la Concha, then Governor of New Mexico, sent Captain Hernan Martin and Captain Diego del Castillo from Santa Fe to explore as far as the Concho River in Texas. Their route from Santa Fe passed thru the northeast corner of Ector County.

Then in 1654 Major Diego de Guadalupe set out with 30 soldiers and some 200 Christian Indians over the same route Martin and Castillo made.

The Comanche was a nomadic, peace-loving tribe until they discovered the horse and made use of it to roam the countryside. In 1723 they started making raids into Mexico and kept the Texas frontier in a turmoil until the late 1800's. The Comanche trails were from North to South. They usually came from the north to the big spring (Big Spring, Texas) or to Mustang spring (near Midland, Texas) and from there they would go south cutting across south Ector County to Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River a few miles south of present day Crane.

Trails made by the Comanches were said to be a mile wide, made by hundreds of hoofs prints. During 1849 it was estimated that 2,000 Comanches roamed the Texas plains.

The Comanches also used the sand hills between Odessa and Monahans for meeting grounds when the cold weather would drive them from the north. Dr. Earnest Wallace of Texas Tech says "... it is difficult to assess to what extent Odessa was an Indian habitat. It lay on the great Comanche War Trail, and in my opinion Odessa was in Comanche territory, but Plains Indians seldom camped except where there was wood, water, and grass."

In 1848 gold was discovered in California. The news reached the east in December, 1848, and in early 1849 many people began the long trip west oblivious to all dangers along the way. Usually the people traveling by wagon train to California were called emigrants, thus the trail became known as the Emigrant Trail; however, the trail is also referred to as the California Trail of 1849.

J. W. Williams of Wichita Falls, Texas, noted authority on trails, says "from the data that falls a little short of absolute accuracy we can know that this old road traveled from the east to the big spring two miles south of the city that now bears the name of the old spring.

From this watering place the early extended westward and reached Mustang springs six miles southwest of Stanton. Then it passed two or three miles north of the heart of Midland - on through north Odessa to a watering place in the Sand Hills some seven miles northeast of Monahans.

In April, 1849, Captain R. B. Marcy, Fifth Regiment Infantry received "special orders" to leave Ft. Smith, Arkansas for Santa Fe, New Mexico, "for the purpose of affording protection to our citizens emigrating to our newly acquired territories." His orders on his return trip from Santa Fe to Arkansas were to establish a southern route through Texas and on that trip Marcy stated in his journal "... from the Sand Hills road followed an old Comanche trail until we turned to the left, two miles from our present camp. We are now near ponds in the prairie, where, judging from present appearances, there will always be water found, except in the dry season (The two ponds referred to are believed to be the buffalo wallows located west Ector County).

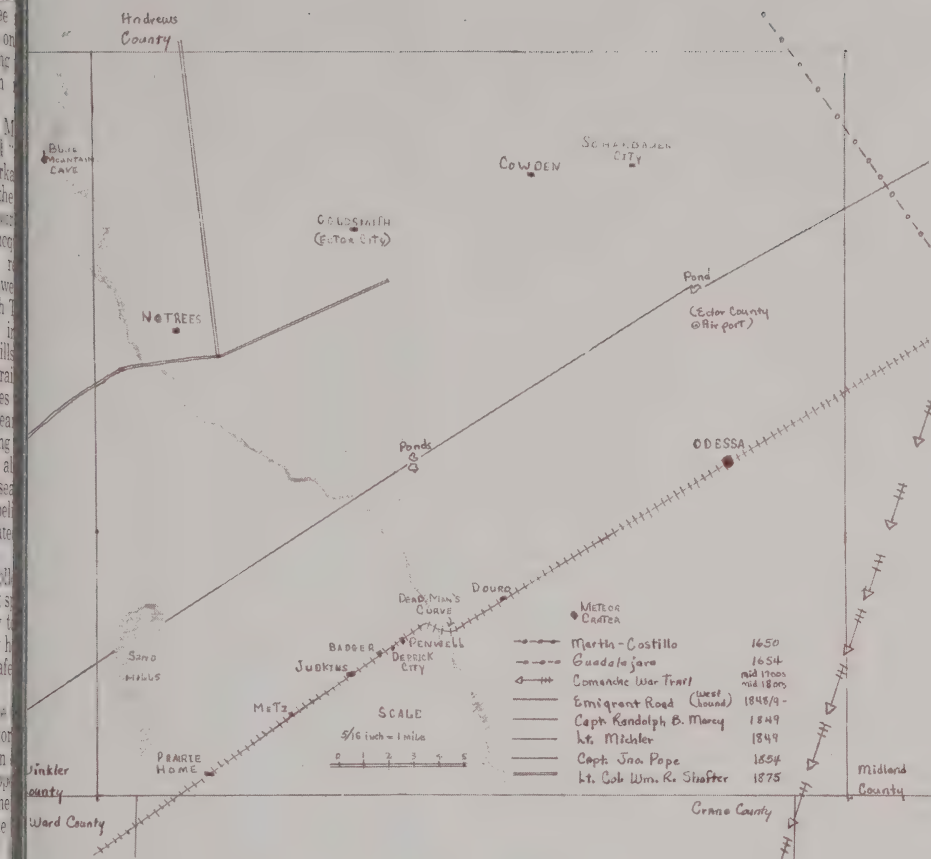
Later in 1849 Lt. Michler followed Captain Marcy's trail from the big spring through present day Ector County to the Pecos. By order of the U. S. Army he was attempting to make the way safer for the emigrants.

By authority of a law of 1853, the U. S. Army made surveys of routes for the Pacific Railroad Company. Captain John Pope, with the U. S. Army Topographical Engineers, had charge of the survey from the Rio Grande to the Red River. Pope's route followed the route made by Marcy and the emigrants across the sandhills, Ector County, Big Spring, northeast to reach Preston Ferry on the Red River.

The Texas frontier virtually reverted back to the Indians for four years during the Civil War for all militia were busy taking sides in the war.

During the summer and fall of 1871 Lt. Col. Wm. R. Shafter and his command made a wide 840 mile sweep from Fort Concho (present San Angelo) over the West Texas plains area, to push the Indians from the plains to the reservations set aside by the U. S. Government and to explore the area. A detachment under Lt. Geddes came into Ector County in September from the sand hills water holes, camped a few days and traveled northwest to rejoin Shafter's command. Shafter stated in his January 4, 1872 dispatch to the Asst. Adjutant General "at the time my Command left the Plains to come in, I do not believe there was an Indian east of the Pecos and south of the Red River."

In 1881 civilization really arrived in Ector County for the railroad came through bringing many people with hope and plans for their future here in the Plains of Texas.



MATERIAL SOURCES FOR HISTORICAL MAP OF ECTOR COUNTY

Prepared by Grace King and
Betty Orbeck, 1961

LANDMARKS & SITES

- 1. Odessa Meteor Crater
- 2. Dead Man's Curve (named in 1881, originally called Colt's Cut until accident, thereafter called called above by railroad men)
- 3. Blue Mountain Cave (actually located in Winkler County)

TRAILS AND EXPEDITIONS

1. Martin' - Castillo	1650
2. Guadalajara	1654
3. Comanche War Trail	mid 1700s — mid 1800s
4. Emigrant Road (west bound)	1848-9 —
5. Marcy (east bound)	1849
6. Michler (west bound)	1849
7. Pope (east bound)	1854
8. Shafter	1874

TEXAS AND PACIFIC RAILROAD—JULY 1881

TOWNS (PAST, PRESENT & PROPOSED)

1. Odessa (platted & developed in 1886)
2. Judkins (platted & developed in 1907)
3. Goldsmith (platted as Ector City in 1937, developed)
4. Notrees (platted and developed)
5. Penwell (platted and developed)
6. Cowden (platted 1930 and developed)
7. Prairie Home (platted 1911, never developed)
8. Scharbauer City (platted 1937, never developed)
9. Derrick City (platted 1927, never developed)
10. Doura (platted never developed)
11. Metz (T&P Section House, shipping point)
12. Badger (T&P stop)

THE ODESSA LAND AND TOWNSITE COMPANY

By Emil F. Beck

Odessa, now a bustling community of over 80,000 population, as recorded by the 1960 census, was not always such a vigorous, thriving community. As a matter of fact, back in the early 1880's, there were not even enough people in the area to petition the state for a new county.

The state required a population in a given area of at least 150 people to organize a county. This finally occurred on March 8, 1885. Some of the early day settlers signing a petition to form this this county were: George Hogg, G. M. Skelton, C. D. Price, Kelly Hogg, J. J. Amburgey, J. G. Dawson, L. W. Morris and G. Brashear. The area in which Odessa is located was a part of Tom Green County, of which San Angelo was the county seat.

The County of Ector was finally formed by an act of the Twentieth Legislature by House Bill 113, and divided the western portion of Tom Green County into six new counties. Ector County was one of these new counties, being named in honor of General Matthew Ector, commander of Ector's Brigade, and Judge of the Court of Appeals in Texas. This bill was passed, and took effect February 26, 1887.

About the same time this was taking place, other things that would soon be effecting the destiny of the new county were happening. John Ireland, Governor of Texas issued a land patent dated February 23, 1883, to the Texas & Pacific Railroad for 640 acres which was described rather interestingly: "In Tom Green County, known as Survey No 21, Township 2-South, Block No. 42, on the waters of the North Concho, a tributary of Colorado River, about 165 miles N. 78° West from Ben Ficklin and 12 1/4 miles South, 3 1/2 East from the 165 mile center line of the Texas and Pacific Railroad Reservation, by virtue of land scrip No. 4130, issued by the Commissioner of the General Land Office, October 6, 1876". This was later dated and filed in the Deed Records of Ector County, Texas, on February 23, 1886. This same 640 acres was sold and deeded by special warranty deed to a man by the name of John Hoge of Zanesville, Ohio, for a price of two thousand five hundred sixty dollars, or four dollars per acre. This man, we are to hear a great deal more about in the County of Ector, as he was the founder of the original townsite of Odessa. In addition to this section

semi-monthly, for one-way tickets ciation to encourage people to migrate to Texas. These excursions of land, Texas and Pacific Railroad deeded some 22 more sections to this same individual, all of which were in Block township 2-South.

Mr. Hoge lived in Zanesville, Ohio and must have been a well established, well-thought-of person in that community. It was he and his friends who formed the Odessa Land and Townsite Company, and the Odessa Improvement and Irrigation Company, a corporation. Much has been learned about the Odessa Land and Townsite Company, as a charter was not granted by the State of Texas; however, it is believed Odessa Improvement and Irrigation Company did obtain a charter. As far as can be determined, Mr. Hoge was Trustee of the Land and Townsite Company while Mr. James Herdman was President. The lawyers were also interested in the company. Their names were Tileston Spangler, and W. T. Finley, his partner.

The original townsite of Odessa covered approximately 300 acres with some 78 platted blocks. These blocks were bounded on the west by the present streets of Washington & Sam Houston on the south by the railroad tracks; the east by Center Street, or where Center would extend should it be brought south from Eighth Street; and on the north by Eighth Street. At the time of booklet, "Texas, The New Southwest The New County of Ector, The New Town of Odessa" was printed, many lots of the original townsite had already been sold. A list of the remaining lots was published with their revised price list. These lots were in the following categories: residential lots 50 feet by 100 feet, located on the corner were One Hundred Fifty Dollars, inside residential lots were One Hundred Dollars, corner business lots 25 feet by 140 feet were Two Hundred Dollars, and inside business lots this size were One Hundred Fifty Dollars. Terms offered were one-third cash, one-third in one year, and one-third in two years. Interest in the days was 8 per cent per annum on the unpaid balance. A 10 per cent discount was given on deferred payments in cash. Some 450 lots remained to be sold in the early part of 1888. By tracing the records, one can see many of these lots have been sold for taxes in the past decades. The rosy picture painted by the early-day developers was not nearly as picturesque when the settler actually came to visit. Special trains were arranged through the Texas Traffic Association.

The rates applied to all points Texas, however not just Odessa. Tickets were sold from St. Louis, Cairo, Memphis, Kansas City, and Atchison. Tickets were sold with stop-over privileges, lasting a maximum of 60 days, while enroute privileges were limited to 15 days each. The excursions were arranged for the winter of 1888, indicating they would possibly be resumed in the fall. There is no way of knowing the number of people who took advantage of those 60-day excursion trips.

The book, "Texas, the New South", by The New County of Ector, The Town of Odessa", published in January 1888, gave quite an insight into the promotion of the new townsite. They depicted Odessa and Ector County as an ideal cultural area. Their letterhead, a map of which can still be seen in the collection of our own Rim Rock City, gave a vivid description of the location. Marking the distance as 329 miles west of Ft. Worth, and 287 miles east of El Paso on the Texas and Pacific Railroad. They bragged about "The Staked Plains of Texas", sunshine, pure water, and no mosquitoes. In answer to inquiries received from all over the United States, they painted a beautiful picture of the town, assuring the people it was the finest investment they could make. The developers, a very optimistic group, emphasized, "dengue fever prevalent in Texas and East Texas, and other South States," was unknown here, having never had a case. They assured prospective customers there were no Indians nearer than 300 miles, and there had never been a Mexican raid as the town was at least 200 miles north of the Rio Grande. Selling features included, "cowboys as peaceful as gentlemen; and no lions, and a promise there never will be a war." This Company assured people of a library, and a library, and proudly announced they already had a Post Office, a Telegraph Office, Express Office, Telegraph Office, and daily trains between St. Louis and San Francisco.

The Odessa Land & Townsite Company was primarily interested in selling land. As they went to great length to explain to the prospective settler just what they might find on "The Staked Plain of Texas"; the cost of various materials for an entire house, and the money needed to get started. It is interesting to note, a one-room house 14 feet square cost One Hundred Dollars, while a two-room house 16 feet by 28 feet (painted) cost Three Hundred Thirty Dollars. Business houses 24 feet by 50 feet could be purchased for prices ranging from One Hundred Fifty Dollars to Five

Hundred Fifty Dollars. The new pioneer could brick his house for only Thirteen Dollars per thousand brick.

Wages were also cheap in the frontier days. Common labor could expect to make a dollar and one-half per day, while mechanics made from Two Dollars to Three Dollars per day. A sheep-herder would be hired for 15 to 25 Dollars per month, with board. Cowboys were hired for Thirty to Sixty Dollars per month with board. From the time the town originated in May, 1886, to the early part of 1888, eleven buildings had been erected. We have already mentioned some of these. One, a two-story frame structure, measuring 32 feet by 80 feet with 20 rooms was used as a sanitarium. Dr. R. E. Haughton, M. D., was in charge of this. He had been a practicing physician for 37 years in Indianapolis, Indiana, and brought many recommendations with him when he came to establish this sanitarium.

From an agricultural viewpoint, the statement was made that a 40 acre irrigated farm in Ector County would make more money than 160 acres in Kansas or Iowa (hastily stating this was a prediction). They brought out the fact there were 576,000 acres in Ector County, two-thirds classified as agricultural land. Nor did they forget about taxes, for it seems in those days taxes were regarded about as they are today. The rate in 1887 was one dollar on one hundred dollars, with land being valued at one dollar twenty five cents per acre. Having covered about all of the phases of a good and successful promotion, the Odessa Land & Townsite Company included answers about location, climate, people, agriculture, and romance.

It has been mentioned that a letter is on file at Rim Rock City. This was a letter from Spangler & Finley, Lawyers dated December 21, 1886, to Mrs. Lovelia S. Pessinger of Point Pleasant, West Virginia. They were sending her a deed for 5 acres of land only one mile from the new town of Odessa. A few sentences in this letter read, "You are very fortunate, as our agent located the land only about one mile from town, and near the Railroad. We have raised the price on land such as years to \$10.00 per acre." The letter goes on to say she could send her deed to Mr. B. K. Brant, and he would file it at the Court House in Tom Green County. Another letter to Mrs. Pessinger dated January 6, 1886, from Mr. Brant gives assurance her deed was being filed for record.

The records also reveal a deed from Mr. Hoge to a Reverend J. G. Gogley of Alleghany County, Pennsylvania,

where he had purchased a number of lots in the original town of Odessa. It makes a person wonder if perhaps Reverend Gogley was not a personal friend of Mr. Hoge, and perhaps this is where the street we now know as Alleghaney Street might have gotten its name. It is interesting to note, one of the lots he purchased was where the Elliott Hotel now stands. This purchase was September 29, 1886. The total consideration paid for the seven lots was a sum of \$406.00.

The restrictive clause, "No intoxicating beverages or liquors of any kind will be sold, or the property will revert and the deed will become null and void," was prevalent in those deeds signed by Mr. Hoge, which explains why they advertised, "No Saloons." If we could learn more about this man, we might detect why he was so set against saloons and liquor. A portion of his last will and testament helps us to understand a little more about his character. This Will was filed September 13, 1950, in Ector County. It contains 14 pages with some 24 items covering various parts of his estate. To show some of his philosophy, Mr. Hoge stated: "So far in my life, I have not been an orthodox or professed Christian. History gives many instances of wars, crimes, and deeds of injustice committed in the name of religion but does not prove that the Christian faith and doctrine is not right if properly observed. Believing that the influence of modern churches is for the good, I give, and bequeath, and direct my Executors to pay the proper office of each organized church of Zanesville, Ohio, in active operation at the time of my death, the sum of one thousand dollars, without regard to creed, race or doctrine; the Protestant, Catholic, Hebrew, or whatever belief that has a properly organized congregation; each to receive the aforesaid stated amount of One Thousand Dollars, to be used for the benefit of said churches." He displays affection for his close associates, his city, and his relatives throughout his will. It can be seen he was not only a generous man, but a very thorough individual.

Life on "The Staked Plains of West Texas" had been given a boost by the Odessa Land and Townsite Company. By the summer of 1888, many settlers began to arrive. This new life must certainly have been for only the rugged individual, and the independent; for they were the kind needed to thrive in such an area. This type of individual still remains on "The Staked Plain of West Texas" after 75 years, and we can all be proud we are a part of this environment.

THE ADVENT OF THE IRON HORSE

By Bill Walkup

The Iron Horse, as the Indian People called the locomotive, meant the end of his world as he knew it, but, for the people living in West Texas, the building of the railroad meant the arrival of civilization. A railroad had been planned for our area as early as 1853, but these plans were interrupted by the approaching Civil War. In 1871, the Texas and Pacific Railroad Company was granted a charter by a special act of Congress.

The new railroad in 1872 was extended several miles west of Longview. By 1874 after several interruptions, the tracks almost reached Dallas; by 1876 they had built to Fort Worth, then bogged down for the lack of funds. The financier, Jay Gould, then acquired control of the company and they started laying track west toward El Paso.

The building of the T & P through West Texas was unique due to the fact that most of the counties were uninhabited except, as one survey engineer stated, by Indians, rattlesnakes, jack rabbits and coyotes. The railroad overcame this difficulty by carrying its town with it. Velma Barrett states in her book "Odessa, City of Dreams", the construction crews carried these towns in box cars and placed them on a siding where a section house was to be constructed. First, they would dig a well if water was not already available, then when the track was extended far enough ahead they would pack up and move to the end of the track. Sometimes enough followers stayed behind to continue the town and in rare cases, the town flourished and grew into permanent settlements. The history of most railroad towns, however was brief.

Track-laying was brutal, mankilling work in the 1880's. With the absence of machines, everything was accomplished by manpower and/or teams of mules. As evidence of the enormity of their task let's refer to the annals of T & P records, which state that by the time the tracks reached the present site of Odessa the crews had laid 1,000,000 ties and over 30,000 tons of iron. At that time the track crew consisted of three hundred fifty men and sixty teams; they used daily, some twenty-four carloads of iron seventy-five cars of ties and twelve cars of water.

The records also reveal that track-laying was far from the safest occupation. Besides the rare threat to a worker's life from a "bad Indian", snake, sunstroke

elements and overwork, they were in constant danger from occupational hazards such as wrecks and explosions. Rural lives were lost in murders and they were seriously endangered from effects of bad whiskey peddled by pop followers. To combat this later, the government assigned Deputy Marshall Sisseite and a United States Commissioner to "dispense justice to all citizens of the United States Revenue Service". An unpopular move by the government was to attach a company of the Calvary (colored) to the railroad to protect the workers from hostile Indians, which were practically non-existent. The Army was generally believed that the Army was looking for something for them to do but in the end, they created more trouble than they solved.

On November 30th, the Tracks had reached Eastland and were running two passenger trains daily. They were built as far as the present locality of Abilene on January 22, 1881. The railroad wanted to establish a principal cattle-shipping point in the area of what is now Abilene and sent a survey team into the district in 1880. Two previous routes had been suggested, according to an article from the 1946 edition of the *West Texas Historical Association* by Naomi McCaid. One Survey went through Fort Phantom Hill about twelve miles north of Abilene. This route was discarded by the public and several Fort Worth lawyers bought up all the land and gave "Phantom Hill" Scott a share in the venture to go there and look after their interests. When the road did not go through the anticipated townsite, they kept their holding to Scott.

The second suggested route went through Buffalo Gap and surveys were made to run the road through the gap up the Elm (known now as the clear fork of the Brazos). A local Rancher, C. Merchants and Associates, tried to buy out the litigants in the land controversy at Buffalo Gap and failed. Had they succeeded, Abilene would have been located in the Gap and the Texas and Pacific would have run up through the mountains and out on the divide south of it, possibly missing the present sites of Midland and Odessa.

Pioneers followed the railroad and settled around many of the section houses and watering places established by the Texas and Pacific. These settlers were of many nationalities and of as many religions.

On the outskirts of Baird, a Scandinavian colony was formed; at Weatherford, a sizeable French colony of about five hundred families built their homes,

while at Clyde, twenty Portuguese families settled. At the present site of Stanton (then Marienfield), there was a German Catholic colony of about three hundred fifty people. West of Marienfield, some ten miles, was the town of Germania, a German Protestant colony of about forty people, who were emigrants from Saxony.

Midland was settled by people from Iowa, Illinois and Indiana. Some say that Midland was so named because it was settled by Midlanders from the above states, but the more accepted theory is that its name was derived from the fact that it lies halfway on the track from Fort Worth to El Paso.

Just out of Abilene was a Quaker-like Friends colony. Solo lies ten miles east of Odessa, Arcade just west, then Duro, supposedly named by a Mexican track-layer who found the ground very unyielding to pick and shovel, (Duro means hard). Next there was Badger, Judkins, and Metz.

Along this stretch of track lies legendary "Dead Man's Curve". This was originally called Colt's Big Rock Cut and is located on the Cap Rock near Penwell. This curve received its ominous name when an explosion at the end of the track killed several men, who were buried nearby. It has always been told locally that these men were Chinese workers, but an article from the *Dallas Herald* clears up this mystery. The article reads as follows:

"End of Track, T & P Railroad, July 12: The track is now laid to Section 306 or 368 miles west of Dallas . . . and here is what we know as Colt's Big Rock Cut, 5,699 feet wide, and in some places seventeen feet deep. (July 14, 1881, pg. 1, col. 1)". "Special to the *Herald*, Big Springs, July 12: By the favor of Deputy United States Marshall Sissette I got the following facts with regard to a sad affair at Colt's work, a few miles west of the end of track: While tamping a charge of powder on some heavy stone work, the blast was accidentally discharged, killing three men: Barney McEvoy, Foreman, Dan Coyle and Pat Thompson, laborers, killed outright, and a boy named Engisle, the only son of a poor widow wash woman, mortally wounded. Another laborer was dangerously, and three or four others slightly, injured. (July 14, 1881, pg. 1, col. 6)".

It is reported that there are seven graves at this site.

Next came Monahans, named in honor of T & P surveyor, John "Pat" Monahan, who dug the well and made it a very important water stop. Following the

rails we next come to Pyote, originally Coyote, but so often mispronounced by the Chinese workers that it finally officially became known as Pyote. Barstow was supposedly a very important grape-growing and shipping point before their irrigation ditches went dry and Pecos was a well established cowtown of some importance.

There are conflicting stories on how Odessa was named. The original supposition was that it was named after the Russian City because Russian railroaders noted the similarity of our terrain to the Steppes of Russia. This theory is very doubtful, according to R. A. Malone, who is an officer of the T & P. He states: "We had surveyors and construction engineers who were for the most part English, Scotch and Irish. We had many Chinese and Irish track workers and some Latins, . . . but, to our knowledge, not one Russian.

Another version of the naming of Odessa stems from the saga of a wagon train massacre near here, with the only survivor being a small girl. Cowpunchers on a cattle drive supposedly found her the next day and brought her to the small town which was named in her honor, Odessa. This story is doubtful, for the U. S. Cavalry had done a very effective job of rounding up all "hostiles" before the building of the railroad and while there were still Indians who would attack a lone traveler, there were no known bands large enough to wipe out a wagon train.

There is yet another story of a railroad man naming Odessa after his Indian sweetheart, but it is generally believed by historians that Odessa was named after one of the many "Odessas" in the United States, probably by a settler or a railroader from a city of that name.

Along the route of the railroad, fortunes were made and lost by land speculators; towns grew up over night where only the prairie had been before then quickly became ghost towns as the road moved on. Small, sleepy hamlets became important points when the rails reached their city, as the following dispatches show:

A special to the *Dallas Herald*, Big Spring, June 20:

"The water of the Big Springs has proved a failure, and the railroad company will lose money by their investment in the springs. The town is almost depopulated. It consists of one saloon, one restaurant, one water wagon, one gambler, two small groceries or saloons, and a few railroad men longing for pay day."

But the following day the following patch was sent:

"Extensive preparations are being made for a fourth of July picnic and barbecue. J. T. Williams, J. W. Coleman and Q. Fansette, of Yellow House Canyon, are here with sixty thousand pounds of wool for shipment. They have more the way. The town is full of people from different parts of the state. Business improving. Three more buildings going up."

The end of the track was near enough to the present site of Odessa for a Fourth of July celebration and from that day Odessa grew.

Mr. Cal Smith, well-known Odessa rancher, recalls seeing as many as 5,000 cattle waiting in Odessa loading pens and states that at one time this was one of the states' largest cattle shipping points.

Mr. Smith, whose father owned two ranches, one in Stanton and the other near Signal Point in the Guadalupe Mountains, remembers that it rained often and the territory abounded in good grass with very little of the mesquite we now see. Before the railroad, cattlemen were forced to endure long drives to market their herds, and the building of the T & P meant easier shipping and increased profits, but it also brought the settlers a meaner death of the large sprawling cattle companies that covered several counties with but a single ranch.

The six-shooting colt may have tamed the west, but it was those hard, tough steeldriving railroaders who brought civilization to West Texas.



CIVIL WAR VETERANS OF ODESSA

By "Tex" and Chase Hardy

The surrender at Appomatox Court House in Virginia, which officially marked the end of the War Between the States never completely quieted the members of the Confederate or Union veterans who later made Ector County their home.

As late as 1939 a petition circulated throughout Odessa to change the name of Grant Avenue to Main Street.

The northern land development company which originally platted and named many Odessa's oldest streets incorporated not only the names of the Union's leaders in general, but also used names of famous northern rivers and settlements, including Muskingum and Alleghany. These names continued to irritate the predominantly southern citizens of Odessa sixty years later, although Lee Street had been so named to help bring peace among the southern settlers.

A letter from a former Odessa resident, Ada Carter Johnson, recalls the early antagonism between the feuding factions. "The—cowmen and their henchmen fought the Civil War anew against the members of the northern colony that named the nucleus of the baby town (Odessa). A few years later all these old settlers buried their private hatchets and fought the incoming saloons and gaming places."

In the late 1890's Seborn Webb Hillburn, a Georgia native who served in the 19th Brigade of the Texas Militia, and was later twice elected as county judge of Ector County, had the touchy disposition of living directly across the street from J. M. Wadsworth, a Union veteran.

Hillburn's home was located across the street from the present Hancock Street Post Office, on the southeast corner. Mr. Wadsworth lived, appropriately, on the northeast corner, and a daughter of Hillburn recalls that when the two veterans wanted to leave their homes at the same time, they would spit upon the ground and go their separate ways. Although neighbors for many years, they never spoke.

Hillburn's bitterness against the Yankees was intensified by the years he spent in Mexico after the war as a political exile, during which time he earned precarious living for his small family chopping cordwood at seventy-five cents a day.

In the eleventh census of the United States, special schedule, enumerated in June 1890, and listing the names of persons who served in the armed forces of the United States during the "War of the Rebellion," three Union veterans are listed as residents of Ector County. These were Elihu White, John W. Otterman (whose windmill marked one boundary of the Odessa College plat), and James M. Jackson.

Jackson was a Methodist minister, the second one to serve Odessa regularly, and he conducted services in the original college building from 1890 to 1892. Other Union veterans, known to have lived in Ector County, include J. R. Herkimer of New York, Winfield Scott Tripp of New York and Z. Stedham.

Confederate veterans far outnumbered their Union counterparts. Tyre Green Henderson of Sulphur Bluff, an early Odessa resident, served under Captain James W. Bruce in the Texas Military Regiment No. 2, Hopkins County, Ninth Brigade.

Mrs. R. T. Waddell traces her ancestry to another veteran, Jim Flanagan of Alabama, through his daughter, Mollie S. Flanagan Graham.

Mrs. Sallie Ratliff is a descendant of Richard Ratliff, Texas veteran, and his wife, Candis Ratliff. William C. Sublett, discoverer of the famous "Lost Sublett Mine," served in the Texas Militia, and is buried in Odessa Cemetery.

William Avery Massey, who is also buried in Odessa Cemetery, was a private in Company I, 35th Regiment of the Mississippi Infantry. He moved from Alameda, Mississippi to Llano, Texas lived in Fisher County for several years, and moved to Odessa in 1901.

Nathaniel Green Buchanan enlisted in the Confederate service at Gatesville at the age of 33. He served from Coryell County in Captain J. K. Shipman's company, 2nd Frontier District. Perry C. Akin, who came to Odessa in 1894, served under Captain Joe Shelby in an Arkansas unit. He lived in Odessa many years with his wife, Eva, and their son, Carl Akin. G. D. Jones of Tennessee, was a first lieutenant in Co. G, 154th Regiment, Tennessee Infantry. He moved to Odessa near the turn of the century with his wife, the former Frannie Franklin.

John Julius Henderson, prominent Permian Basin rancher and cowboy, was another of the "Boys in Gray." He served as a private in B Co., Fifth Arkansas, enlisting at Willburgh, Cross County Arkansas on June 12, 1861.

County archives were never complete in recording the names of men who had

seen military service. Undoubtedly, like countless men after every war, Odessa had its share of veterans who neither mentioned nor wished to be reminded of the dark days of the '60's.

The vast majority of Ector County settlers were searching for new frontiers and a better way of life, regardless of their former homes north or south of the Mason-Dixon line. Their mutual efforts to build this better way of life is reflected in the names of Grant and Lee Streets, which run peacefully, side by side, serving a growing community, whose progress is a legacy of those who served both the Blue and the Gray.

FIRST OIL DISCOVERED IN ECTOR COUNTY IN 1926

*By Jerry Haynes,
American Oil Editor*

Ector County's fabulous oil history ranks second to none in Texas. The Permian Basin is known throughout the world among oil men, and Ector County is a vital segment of that Basin. It's strange that when oil was finally discovered in Ector County in 1926, there was little excitement or stir.

It took several West Texas "booms" to cause both Odessa and Ector County to sit up and take notice. One of these booms was the Penwell discovery. The mighty "Penn Well" was a gusher of huge proportion that brought-in the field, and completely overshadowed the small strike that heralded the approaching era—the oil and gas era.

As far back as 1904, individuals claimed that there was oil under the sand and rocks of West Texas.

Prof. V. D. Gssaway of the U. S. Geological Survey, while prospecting in Ector County, claimed that "there was unmistakable evidence of petroleum and natural gas, which when properly developed in the near future, would make Sour Lake and Spindle Top look like 30 cents."

With this statement, a little excitement was probably aroused, but nothing happened. The small, sleepy hamlet of Odessa drifted along.

Twenty-two years later, in 1922, the Farmer's Oil Co. of Pennsylvania drilled two wildcat wells in the city limits of Odessa. One well, located where the Rockhill Shopping Center is situated, was

drilled to a total depth of 1042 feet before it was plugged and abandoned.

The company head, H. A. Harts died, causing the end of drilling. B wells were quit for lack of funds.

With the coming of 1926, came J Cosden, who later former the Cosc Petroleum Corp. began drilling a wildcat well 20 miles southwest of Odessa near Judkins.

Located on the A. B. Connell ran the well was known as the No. 1 A. Connell. Drilled by cable tool to a shallow depth, it was finally completed 20 barrels of oil per day.

Still few thought that someday Ector County would produce more than a half billion barrels of oil.

The well, along with several others in the same area, produced for a few years and were abandoned.

The Cosden discovery, completed the fall of 1926, is generally credited with being the first commercial oil in the county. However, Railroad Commission reports list the year of the discovery 1925.

After the few wells that Cosden drilled became depleted, or were not able to produce enough oil to be profitable, the oil fever in Ector County died down again.

The great boom was three years away.

On October 14, 1929, the face of Ector County and Odessa was changed and has been changing ever since. This was the day the great "Penn Well" was brought in, gushing over the top of the derrick and flowing at a reported 600 700 barrels per day.

Drilled by W. A. Black with cable tools, the well became the first huge oil gusher to hit Ector County. The well was located near Penwell, and was known as the No. 1 Kloh. Black drilled the well for Robert Penn.

Production depth of the well was between 3600 and 3800 feet, and gravity of the oil was 32 to 37 degrees.

Even though the county was a little late in finding oil, men and companies had been interested in looking for years. The first oil and gas lease recorded in the Ector County Courthouse was dated March, 1919, three years before the first "dry holes," seven years before the first commercial oil was discovered, and 10 years before the first "gusher" was brought in.

HISTORY OF ECTOR COUNTY COURTHOUSE

By Gerald K. Fugit, County Judge

On July 16, 1891, the Commissioners' court entered an order that one George Bruce was to remove the Municipal Sanitarium to the center of Block 35, and such building was to be used for the County Courthouse. He was to be paid \$300, to give a bond with two good sureties, and to complete the job by August 29, 1891, at which time it was to be accepted by the County Judge and commissioners James Bolton.

This was the first Courthouse of Ector County, and it stood in the same location as the present one. It was a white two-story frame building. The top floor was used for the courtroom of the county and the district courts. The ground floor had four rooms; two rooms were used for the school, one room was used for the sheriff, and the fourth room was used jointly by the county and district clerks.

As was the custom at that time, such a building as this, even though it was designated as a courthouse, was used for all of the functions of the community. School was held here, dances were held in the courtroom, justice was administered, and all of the socials of the community were here.

Even in the beginning, the Commissioners' Court was dubious about the clause in the deed from the Odessa Improvement and Irrigation Company that the land was to revert back to the original grantors if the Courthouse Square was no longer used for a Courthouse. First, the Commissioners refused to accept the deed, but on July 16, 1891, ten days after they had refused the deed, the Court then accepted this deed.

In the northwest corner of the Courthouse, was a windmill and a earthen tank. Around this tank were held picnics and social events, and the churches of the community often used the tank for immersing converts to their particular faith. Notably Baptists and Christian Churches used the water hole for immersion.

This structure was used only twelve years. During this time it was also used as a land office, when the State allowed individuals to file on four sections of land. There is in existence a photograph of the land rush, which the Ector County Library possesses, which depicts the people trying to get into the Courthouse door.

According to the Federal Census, in 1890 the population of Ector County was only 224. However, by 1900, the population had shrunk to a meager 51 people: In between 1900 and 1910 the population grew to 1178, and it was during this population expansion that, in 1904, the Commissioners' Court ordered an election to be held concerning whether a new Courthouse and jail were to be built for Ector County. On March 15, 1904, an election was held. The bonds were to run for forty years at four per cent per annum, and were redeemable at the pleasure of the County at any time after five years. Such election must have been hotly contested, for there were a total of 112 votes cast, 45 against and 67 for, showing a slim margin of 22 votes in favor of the bonds.

It was ordered by the Court that the new Courthouse was to be built just east and in front of the old one. One W. T. Malone was ordered to the sandhills to quarry to examine the sandstone to see if it could be used in the erecting of the new Courthouse.

On July 29, 1904, the cornerstone of the Ector County Courthouse was laid. There were several things that were placed in the cornerstone for the purpose of posterity, some of which are letters that, to my knowledge, have never been published.

The railroad in Ector County was the biggest thing that the County had, so it was only natural that the agent of the railroad, J. M. Frame, place a letter in the cornerstone, which he did. Mr. Frame indicates in his letter that there was "nothing here but stock raising though maybe farming country some day, not much prospects for the town to grow". Although his prediction did not come true as to the growth of the town, still as to stock raising and farming he is correct today.

Another letter which was placed in the box from the same J. M. Frame said this about Odessa: It had a population of about 400, and the letter further says that there were about 250 voters in Ector County and attached Crane counties; further, the world's fair was in "full blast" in St. Louis.

Another letter which, to my knowledge has never been published, is from Kelly Hogg and addressed to the night operator on the Texas and Pacific Railroad. It was dated August 5, 1904. This letter, which was later taken out when the 1904 Courthouse was razed, indicated that Odessa was a wild west town, for he said that we have some of the d — — whiskeys you ever flopped your lip over.

I would put a "hf. pt." in the box with this letter, but these rounders around this burg would tear the cornerstone out if they should happen to get on to it being in there as there are some of them that could smell it." In this letter he describes the county, and talks about the pay that he has received as a telegraph operator.

Also included in this original Courthouse cornerstone were two hands of poker.

The Courthouse itself was a two-story red stone structure. In its day, the Courthouse probably was one of Odessa's finest attractions. On the opening day of the Courthouse in 1904, a masquerade ball was held in the Courthouse, and an immense tray of artificial flowers was passed to the gentlemen present, each picking one flower. In the center of each flower was hidden the picture of one of the young ladies present, and each gentleman who had a flower was to take that lady to supper.

On May 31, 1918, the County Judge, E. V. Graham, issued an order that sidewalks were to be completed on the west side. During this period of time there were a great many cottonwood trees around the Courthouse, which of course subsequently have been rooted out and done away with.

In 1906 the first Christian Church was organized on the Courthouse lawn.

In 1938 the old Courthouse that was constructed in 1904 was razed. The 1904 Courthouse was sold for \$1.00, torn down and the bricks used for the home of a Mr. Allen, which can be seen from highway 80, about ten miles east of Monahans, Texas.

The present Courthouse which was constructed in 1938, was built for the sum of \$245,000. It was said at that time that it was too large for a town of approximately 9,000 people, and that undoubtedly the basement would never be used.

However, times have changed since that date. We now have two county courts in the same building, two district courts, a juvenile court, a commissioners' court, a grand jury and four justices of the peace courts, all of which operate out of three courtrooms. Every office has expanded far beyond any dream of the inhabitants of 1937.

Today the Courthouse is used in various ways. The Genealogy Society has met here, labor union and women's groups periodically assemble in the rooms, and political activity is carried forth from the Courthouse. As in the past, much of the life of the community is centered in and around the Courthouse.

WEEKLY NEWS ODESSA'S FIRST NEWSPAPER ESTABLISHED IN 1895

Established in 1895, the Odessa Weekly News was the town's first newspaper owned and operated by "Uncle Fly" Griffin who came here from Midland.

The News was discontinued in 1898 and in 1904 Claude Shelton started a short-lived paper which he called the Times. In 1907 Jess Frame helped Rotramel launch the Ector County Democrat.

Frame and Rotramel were assisted by Charles Judkins and Gertie Rabb. Mae Harkey, who later became Fred Malone, set type by hand for the paper.

Occasionally a tramp printer would be hired. Typical of these wandering printers was "Uncle Jimmy" Phelps, who in his seventies and had a long flowing beard.

The cornerstone of the 1904 courthouse contained an issue of the Times carrying a brief history of Odessa and Ector County.

Some of the stories in the issue of cowboys getting lost as they drove their herds over the prairie, waiting for the train's smoke to guide them back to town.

In 1910, the Odessa Herald was started by Mrs. Ada Carter Johnson. The paper continued until 1922 when it was discontinued.

All these papers were printed by the hand-set method and run off by hand-power press.

In 1925, Barney Hubbs, owner-publisher of the Pecos Enterprise, started a newspaper called the Ector County Times, as there was no paper being published here at that time.

Hubbs bought two lots on the corner of Texas and Fourth for \$29. He erected a small shop and later built a large building around and over the old one without interrupting publication of the weekly.

Hubbs sold to Abe Whipkey, who turned it over to his son, Bob, and son-in-law Rusk Moody.

Ralph Shuffler bought the newspaper from the Whipkeys in 1929 and he was succeeded by his son, Henderson Shuffler.

In 1948, the Freedom Newspaper Inc., acquired the Odessa American and V. L. DeBolt was named publisher, position he still holds. In 1951, the American moved into a new building at Fourth and Jackson. R. C. Hoiles is owner of Freedom Newspaper.

BLUE MOUNTAIN CAVE

By Mrs. Vernice Hillier

Man, since the dawn of time is said have nourished in his bosom a yearning to "make his mark in the world" or to put up some permanent symbol of his reputation and expression. That early man in this very section felt some such urge and successfully carried out its expression is found in pictographs on a ledge above the rock shelters at what is locally known as "Blue Mountain Caves."

Blue Mountain is neither a mountain, nor is it blue. It is a type of peninsular projection of the Staked Plains. It consists of two rock shelters and is in the extreme eastern portion of Winkler County near the Ector County line. The shelters are low and small.

"In the limestone immediately above, and for a distance of one hundred feet in both directions are one hundred and thirty eight mortar holes. They are of the elliptical type, and average about nine inches in depth, seven inches in length and four inches in width, tapering gradually to the bottom. These are said to be the only mortar holes for miles around."

The paintings average about four inches and were made to express an incident that happened to the Indians, especially the Comanches that roved this territory.

Captain Jim Cook, who was captured by the Comanches remembered the paintings at Blue Mountain. This was in 1864 and Captain Cook was a boy of twelve. In an interview years later Cook described the pictographs.

1. Jackson, A. T.; *Picture-Writing of Texas Indians*; University of Texas, 1938; p. 141.

"It was after the raids down in white man's country that the Comanches did most of their paintings—. The Indians took a soft red rock and burned it until it was nearly ready to crumble, then rushed it to a powder and mixed it with water to make a red pasty paint. Then with a stick or twig feathered out on one end for a brush, they painted whatever came to their minds. The kids were always fooling around with paint, practicing, and the older fellows did the same thing, but when a warrior came back from a raid he always made a long parangue about what he had seen in white man's country, and he would often draw a picture on the cliff to illustrate what he told—The Comanches didn't go in for signs just as signs. They usually tried to paint things they were thinking

about in full."

One of the most realistic paintings at Blue Mountain is a horse standing in front of what could be a fence. Since the Comanches were horse thieves this symbol could be interpreted to mean that horses in the area were for the taking. In speaking of this design Cook interpreted it as follows "you see the bars of the fence are down at one end. They meant to show that the place to which the other marks pointed was good horse country and an easy place to steal horses."

Another design Cook interprets as being a water hole sign. He said "he had sketched a crude tree with nine curved marks and an arrow pointing to the northeast. That meant it was nine days travel to a waterhole to the northeast. The location of this waterhole was north of Lamesa."

One of the most impressive pictures is one of two lizards. It appears as though they had been in a fight. One of the lizards is on its back with its feet straight up and the other is standing on its hind legs over its victim. A buck probably saw this fight and illustrated the story as he told it.

Civilization in this area is interpreted by a painting of a figure that resembles a woman. Probably she had been murdered by the Comanches, and this was their method of bragging about it.

Signs and illustrations were used as a means of communication from the earliest times. They were used to convey messages to their followers. An example of this is found in Blue Mountain. A long arrow points to the skeleton of a fish. This could be interpreted to mean that fishing was good on the Pesos River. This would help the Indian war parties and hunters find food on their excursions.

There are also signs of life before the Comanches. A hand print is set back in a little cleft in the wall, protected from the weather, shows a hand with the third finger amputated at the first joint. Authorities say the stone age men of most races had a ceremony of painting such a hand print. The sign of attainment of manhood for every youth was his first hunt, and before going on the hunt, he sacrificed a joint or two or a whole finger to the gods of hunting. To make a permanent record of his sacrifice, he painted the handprint.

As to the potholes on the roof, Capt. Cook reported that they were not made by the Comanches he was with. But the Indians found the holes and made good use of them for grinding and pounding seeds and mesquite beans. These were

mixed with fruit of cacti and made a very delectable dish.

Another shelter is found about four miles west of the first two. In this shelter is found a solitary painting of a chief wearing a headdress. No other information is known of this painting.

There are a number of other paintings in the surrounding counties, but Blue Mountain is the most significant of all. It shows the red man, who knew this land before the coming of the earliest settlers have left their mark, and we may well look with awe on the permanent record of their lives.

EARLY POST OFFICES AND TOWNS IN THE PERMIAN BASIN AREA

By Wylene Kirk

Since the construction of the Texas and Pacific Railway in 1881 and the oil boom in the 1920's, man has worked diligently toward building the cultural phenomena of present day West Texas. The scarcity of water, little rainfall, and the presence of deep sand proved to be difficult handicaps for many settlers before the coming of the railroad. However, by 1880 a few ranchers were scattered about.

The Commission of the Texas and Pacific Railway planned towns along the track and erected a section house every ten miles. At many of the locations only a name and a section house ever existed. Some towns grew for a short time and then faded. Where there was an abundant supply of water from the wells along the railway, towns were usually well planned and continued to grow.

The oil boom caused other towns to spring up. In some instances these were poorly planned. Thus a number of early West Texas towns failed to survive the boom years.

The counties of Ector, Ward, Winkler, Crane, and Loving were created in 1887 from the original Tom Green County. Andrews county was created in 1874. Records from the post office department give a great deal of interesting and valuable information about the early post offices which were established in these counties.

Odessa had several postmasters prior to the organization of Ector County in 1891. Elza White was made postmaster on August 19, 1885; Theodore F. Willson became postmaster on March 9, 1886;

and Harry A. Rathvon took over the job on November 9, 1886. Rathvon been postmaster at Warfield (Mick County) in 1885. R. W. Rathbun became Odessa's first postmaster after the county was organized.

The first post office opened at Judkins on December 26, 1906 with Judkins postmaster. According to the records the post offices were discontinued and re-established several times between the years 1906 and 1936. The office was first discontinued in March, 1910 when Felix E. Jones was postmaster. On August 26, 1912, George E. Printz, a former Judkins postmaster, re-established the office. The office was again discontinued in September, 1914. Morgan E. Lewis was responsible for re-opening the office two years later. For a third time the post office was discontinued in 1915. The office was moved to Odessa in September, 1919. Dorothy Tharp came operator when an office was established at Judkins on August 15, 1928. Hiram R. Smith was postmaster at Judkins in 1935. The Judkins office was consolidated with the Penwell office on June 15, 1936.

In 1908 H. C. Anderson petitioned the postal department for an office to be located in Prairie Home. This post office became effective on January 15, 1913 with Anderson as the first postmaster. On April 30, 1913 the office was moved to Judkins.

In the spring of 1930, Mrs. Kate Morris requested that a post office be located at Penwell. Walter Robert Bates was made the first Penwell postmaster when the office opened on June 30, 1930.

A request was made in 1936 to consolidate the Penwell and Judkins offices. Mrs. Jewell H. Smith was the Penwell operator. The office was moved a few miles west to the old Badger townsite.

The oil boom of 1936 caused Mrs. Inge Dunn to petition Washington for a post office to be established in Goldsmith. The town was called Ector County until a postal inspector notified the new town of an Ector, Texas, in Fannin County. Goldsmith was then selected as the new name. Mrs. Dunn served as the town's first postmaster.

Charles E. Brown served as the first postmaster of Notreess; according to postal communications, the location had been known by such names as Caprock, TX, and Strawberry.

The first post office for North Cowden was established in 1947. Anna Dyer served as postmaster. Oil was discovered in the Cowden field in 1930.

PIONEER DAYS IN ODESSA



Mollie and Joe Graham as they were in 1893



*Belles of the Gay Nineties: (Left to right):
Lula Hogg, Alice Hogg and Emma Brock*



*Mrs. Georgia (Hogg) Frame, boarding the
T. P. in 1908. Her brother, Kelly Hogg,
T. P. telegraph operator at that time, sees
her off.*



*Land rush fight in front of first Ector
County courthouse. In 1904 Texas' school
land was thrown open to the public. Two
factions claimed rights to filing. The above
informal gathering resulted.*



Judge Buchanan (left) and his chuck wagon and cowboys. Note coffee grinder on wagon.



After a deer hunt (left to right) Hence Pegues, Jim Ray and Jim Day



Big July 4 celebration in Odessa—in the center of things—in front of the



Mr. and Mrs. M. G. Buchanan 1901. Mr. Buchanan was one of Ector County's first County Commissioners and beginning in 1892 was County Judge. Mrs. Buchanan was one of early Odessa school teachers.



Mattie Foster (now Mrs. Peele), sister of Mrs. A. W. Moore, in finest transportation of that day.



*in 1912—with an airplane right
ly and John's pool hall.*

PIONEER DAYS IN ODESSA



Old pecan tree corner of Fourth and Lee as it looked in 1926. In front of Waddell house. The house since has been rebuilt and cars streamlined.



Wedding picture of 1904: Shown are Mr. and Mrs. Carl Akin in their wedding clothes



Early Odessa band, conducted by Professor Carl Beck, an accomplished musician from Germany. This band played for all the towns from Toyah to Abilene. Shown are: (front row left to right) John H. Williams, Willie Beaty, (Mrs. Will Martin), Tom Foreman, Carl Thain, Lillie Brown (Mrs. Bates), and Lum Wadsworth. Second row: R. H. Thain, Carl Beck, Director, Will A. Martin, President, Jim Howard. Third row: Joe Rice, John Brock, Bert Rawlins. (Little Bill Brock is in rear.)



Interior of Citizens National Bank, Frank Bates, president. From left to right are: Bob Bates, Frank Bates, Homer Henderson and Henry Pegues.

A post office was established at Monahan's Well in 1883. The name was changed to Trueheart in 1887. William B. Jones served as postmaster at this time & was still serving as operator in April, 1901. In 1891 Ward county was organized with Barstow, a town of fifty people, as the county seat. Minnie L. Cranson opened the first post office in Barstow on November 3, 1891. In April of this same year the town of Trueheart (originally Monahan's Well) was changed to its present name of Monahans. The county seat was moved from Barstow to Monahans in June, 1938.

In December, 1896, James G. Baker of Grandfalls and E. A. Rays, postmaster at Santa Lucia, requested that a post office be located at Grandfalls, (Santa Lucia is 6.7 miles south of Grandfalls). The office became effective on May 10, 1897 with Baker as postmaster.

Monahans had an early post office site established on April 11, 1906 with T. E. Under as operator. Albert D. Pigman served at Pyote when its first post office opened on March 20, 1907. The Royalty office became effective on August 26, 1909 with Naomi M. Lewis as operator. Annie M. O'Brien served as the first postmaster at Wickett beginning June 14, 1907. In 1948 Mrs. Pattie Ree Miles requested that an office be located at Gulf City, also known as New Gulf Camp.

Andrews County was organized in 1910. The first postal establishment in the county was at Bernice, later called after Lake. The office opened on April 1, 1890 but was soon moved to Midland. Jim L. Mooney was the first operator. The next post office for Shafter Lake became effective on December 14, 1907 with Bert M. Irwin as postmaster.

In May, 1903 a petition was made for a post office to be established at Cal, later called Yard. Cal was on the postal route between Tennessee Colony and Palestine. J. S. Avant, postmaster at Tennessee Colony signed the request with Bruce Gray, the proposed Cal postmaster.

Pierre Van Hollebeke became postmaster at Hollebeke also known as China Pound on August 14, 1903.

Other early post offices in Andrews County were at Ethel, March 21, 1908, with Arthur H. Taylor as postmaster; at Ida, March 6, 1908, with Minnie W. Logsdon as postmistress; and at Logsdon (formerly Ida) on June 23, 1908, with Minnie W. Logsdon serving as operator. Florey had its first office effective January 18, 1909 with Lee N. Smith as postmaster. Florey was also known as Mackover.

The town of Andrews opened its first post office on January 20, 1909. Thomas

M. White served as the first postmaster.

In 1948 a post office was petitioned for Fullerton, also known as Fullerton Field or Area. This location was near Ranch Road Number 17 between Eunice, New Mexico and Andrews.

Some of the first post offices established in Winkler County before its organization were at Duval, Joiel, and Theodore. The Duval office was opened on April 3, 1908 with John L. Howe as postmaster; Joiel, June 22, 1908, with James N. McGehee as operator; and at Theodore, November 10, 1909 with William H. Gibbs serving as postmaster. On October 15, 1910 the Duval office was discontinued and moved to Kermit. James S. Bayne became the postmaster at Joiel on October 20, 1909. In less than a year the Joiel office was moved to Odessa. The Theodore office was moved to Kermit on February 29, 1912.

Kermit became the county seat of Winkler when the county was organized on April 5, 1910. The first post office in Kermit became effective on July 18, 1910 with Marvin G. Scott serving as postmaster.

Hayflat, near Theodore, requested that a postoffice be opened to serve its 40 families. The Hayflat office was later moved into Loving County.

With the discovery of oil on the Hendricks Ranch in 1926, other towns sprang up. Tulsa opened its first post office on August 20, 1927 with Cora Higgins as operator. The office was closed two years later and was moved to Wink.

Wink, first called Winkler, requested a post office. The postal authorities notified the applicant that there was a Winkler, Texas already. The legal name became Wink and the first post office opened on June 18, 1927. Marvin E. Beasley was the postmaster.

In 1929 Audra Sparks petitioned Washington for a post office to be established at Cheyenne. On August 6, 1929 the office became effective with Vaden J. Carney as its postmaster.

Crane County was organized on September 3, 1927. The early postal records reveal that a post office was established at Crane on April 9, 1908 with Walter R. Bates serving as postmaster. Sanford R. Hereford and Issac Luke Gray were other operators of the Crane post office before it was discontinued on April 15, 1913. In October, 1912 an office was located at Stillwell, but it was moved to Buenavista a year later.

After the discovery of oil in Crane County, a post office was re-established in February, 1927. Claude H. Martin served as the first postmaster in the new town of Crane.

Loving County was organized in 1937. Records show that a post office was established at Mentone as early as July, 1893. N. Van Horn, postmaster at Pecos, made the request for the Mentone office.

William T. Ritchie was postmaster at the Juanita post office which became effective November 19, 1909. Juanita was changed to the name Porterville in February, 1910. Richie was still the postmaster.

Other early post offices near Juanita were Arno, Woody, and Hayflat. Arno was two and one-half miles southwest of Juanita with Mrs. Ola Solman serving as postmaster. Woody was between Arno and Juanita. Mrs. Sarah E. Hunt opened the Woody office on April 1, 1910. This office was moved to Arno on December 30, 1911.

Hayflat, Winkler County, petitioned in October, 1909 that a post office be established to supply 40 families. Postal records reveal that an office was opened on March 7, 1910 with Judge H. Warden serving as operator in Hayflat (moved to Loving County). The post office was discontinued on October 15, 1913 and was moved to Kermit.

THE ODESSA METEOR CRATER

*Excerpts from a paper compiled by
Ronald DeWayne Godard*

Meteorite bodies form the only physical contact our planet has with outer space. Since the beginning of time, these heavenly visitations have awed and fascinated mankind. There is a theory that life as we know it on earth could have started from very minute forms of life existing on meteorors, perhaps fragments of unknown planets, which crashed to earth billions of years ago.

Most meteorors, when they make their brief but brilliant entrance into the earth's atmosphere, do so without the knowledge of any human being; but those few that do come to man's attention excite a great deal of interest. The largest meteor crater known is the world famous Barringer crater located near Winslow, Arizona. This enormous depression, over a mile wide, attracts hundreds of tourists each year. It is a little known fact that the second largest crater in

The United States is located only eight miles southwest of Odessa, Texas.

This celestial missile, whose estimated weight is 625 tons, splashed the surrounding terrain aside like water upon impact with the earth, leaving a hole 550 feet across and 100 feet deep. All that remains to remind us of this occurrence is a small depression that greatly resembles a small dry lake. After centuries of wind and rain, the gaping hole, once

a deep crater, has been filled in almost completely by sand, rocks and mesquite bushes. Today the crater is only 15 feet deep at its lowest point, while it remains the original 550 feet wide. There is little indication now that this lone forsaken spot was once the center of great deal of national attention.

The earliest known discovery of the Odessa meteor crater was made in 1891 by Julius D. Henderson, a nearby rancher, while searching for a calf. Finding in the crater, he recognized the depression as something unusual; but he was no geologist, and therefore failed to realize that this dip in the landscape was in actuality one of nature's rare phenomena. In 1920 Virgil Graham, resident of Ector County, discovered strange lava-like rock near the crater. He gave this stone to Samuel R. McKinney (later to become Odessa's first mayor) who used it as a paper weight. Two years later Dr. A. C. Bibbins, a geologist from Baltimore, was in McKinney's office and upon examination of the "paper weight" declared that it was part of a metal meteorite. Dr. Bibbins sent a fragment of the meteorite to George F. Merrill, an eastern chemist, to be analyzed. It was found to be composed of extremely hard nickel steel and was undoubtedly part of a heavenly body.

The later Dr. E. H. Sellards, Director of the Bureau of Economic Geology of The University of Texas, was also in Ector County during 1922, trying to locate and report the presence of certain natural resources in the state, especially potash. One morning his work took him to the site of the crater. His trained eye quickly recognized the unnatural break in the terrain; even though it was filled with debris. He also noted that the surrounding strata had been broken and blasted by the impact of what was no doubt a meteor. Dr. Sellards knew instinctively that oyster shell-shaped depression was an important discovery; and he left Ector County with a notebook full of observations.

Attempts to develop the crater were made, none of which were outstandingly successful; but scientists from all over the United States began to visit Odessa to view and study this new found wonder. Such men as Dr. Lincoln La Plaz of the Ohio State University Meteorite Expedition; Dr. Clyde Fisher of the American Museum of Natural History in New York and Dr. Harvey H. Nininger, owner of the world's largest private collection of meteorites, visited the Odessa meteor crater. These internationally known scientists and others flocked to Odessa to study and add more to man's store of knowledge about the surrounding universe.

Through the efforts of forward-looking Ector County officials, such as County Judge A. H. Dennison, it was made possible for Dr. Sellards to fulfill one of his fondest ambitions. In 1939 he returned to Ector County with Mr. Glen L. Mans, Associate Museum Director of the University of Texas, and prepared to make an extensive scientific study of the Odessa meteor crater. Ector County officials, realizing the scientific importance of the crater, made public funds available for the project, paying the cost of certain machinery and lumber for construction and operation of the shaft, as well as building a road to the site. The Works Progress Administration (the familiar W. P. A. of the depression days) furnished labor for the excavation. The project was aided also by the Humble Oil Company, the American Askania Corporation, The University of Texas and several Texas landowners—all an indication of the attention the crater had attracted.

As the work began, it was found that there were actually three craters and thousands of smaller meteorites. The largest of the three craters is believed to be the second largest in the United States. The other two, though still discernible, are filled in almost completely. An estimated 130 pounds of the meteorites were found in the first few weeks of excavation, most of which were sent to Austin to The University of Texas Museum. It was theorized that the meteor shower that formed the craters could have been the head of a small comet, possibly part of the one that is supposed to have formed the Barringer crater in Arizona. In the largest crater, the fossil remains of a long extinct North American horse and other primitive forms of life were found, indicating the great age of the craters.

This project quickly caught the imagination of Ector County citizens and extensive plans were made to convert the region into the first "shootingstar" park in the world. Plans were made to fence the large crater, dig three observation tunnels and install an underground catwalk around the meteorite. It would then be opened to the public.

Work at the crater continued for several years until funds were nearly exhausted and the project was brought to a sudden standstill in 1941 when the United States entered World War II. Efforts have been made since the close of the war by various individuals and groups to revive interest and secure support to finish the project, but none have been successful. Preservation of the crater site and excavations would be an in-

valuable aid to the scientific study of outer space and other fields, as well as an educational exhibit for the public.

The Odessa meteor crater, second largest in the United States, remains in relative obscurity without so much as a sign on the side of the road to signify its existence.

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ECTOR COUNTY

*By Tracy Byers,
American Staff Writer*

The one-classroom school of Odessa in 1890 has developed in a system with actual cost of buildings and grounds listed at \$29,035,185 and with 1,180 teachers in place of the first lone woman.

More than 22,000 boys and girls enrolled this fall, in place of the 14 children who were listed from 1885 to 1887. Those children went to school in a rented room, predating the first 1890 school house.

The first teacher drew \$40 a month in pay. The Ector County Independent School District now is the largest employer in the county and its budgeted payroll this year totals \$6,687,550. The individual teacher starts at about \$4,400 a year, which varies according to degrees and experience.

All early-day schooling wasn't in school buildings. Ranchers with several children joined other ranch families and set up a class that might be taught by a member of the family, or by a teacher paid room and board and a monthly salary.

This practice was exemplified in 1906 by R. W. Smith and Teague Baker, who lived on adjoining ranches.

They got together and built an eighty-by-ten-foot classroom in the Baker pasture. This was the start of what became the Baker school district. They hired a teacher for \$15 a month, plus room and board.

Later the two ranchers built a larger school house, but needed money to help operate it. They decided to create a public school district.

Smith explained the procedure in this way:

"Since we had to have trustees to run a public school, the county commissioners ordered an election to name trustees. Baker and I held the election. We opened the polls at eight in the morning and closed them at 6 p.m. in accordance with the law."

"The county judge had told us," Smith continued, "that we had to have three men to hold that election, so we got a cowboy to sign the paper with us. By 6 p.m. the cowboy, Baker and I had been the only ones who voted. We declared ourselves elected, closed the polls and brought the papers to town the next day. So we had a public school with five pupils. The county paid us \$15 a month and Baker and I paid \$15 making \$30 a month we paid the next teacher."

Odessa's earliest efforts to have a public school were marked with hardship. The first school building here burned down in 1892 a few months after it was completed. For years, the schools, like the people in the County, were poorly financed.

The busy early-day settlers took little time out from struggling to make a living on their ranches and farms, and there practically are no exact records that would make a history of the era complete.

According to available records the first public school in Odessa was taught by Inez Rathbun during February and March, 1890.

In the early-day organization of the counties of West Texas, Ector started as an administration unit of Midland County and Midland paid Miss Rathbun \$57 a month for the two months.

Although Ector County had been created by the Legislature, it had not been organized in 1890, and for judicial and political purposes it was attached to Midland County.

Neither Odessa nor Midland were large enough for the census bureau to report on them for many years. Midland first appeared in the U. S. census in 1910, with 2,192 people. Odessa first appeared in 1930 with 2,407. By 1950 Odessa was listed with 29,495 and Midland with 21,713. The new 1960 census listed Odessa with 80,000 residents, and Midland with 62,000.

Although there had been many earlier ranch schools the school taught by Miss Rathbun is regarded as the first tax-supported school in this county.

Ector County citizens took steps to establish their own school, using a room in the courthouse. Mrs. E. R. Bryan was the 1890 teacher and taught for seven and a half months for \$40 a month.

There have been public school classes every year in this county since Mrs. Bryan's first class. Sometimes the terms were shorter, however.

About the same time a group of early-day settlers decided to start a college here, and Odessa College opened in an \$18,000 building erected by a group of Methodists.

School was not actually held in the college building until 1891, when A. W. Wight came from Maine to teach elementary subjects to 14 students. Wight's salary was \$100 a month.

On June 6, 1892 the college building was burned. No one knew the exact cause of the fire, but it was believed a group of cowboys set it afire, because they objected to the Methodists' fight against liquor. The backers never were able to rebuild the college.

The public school burned a few months later.

Public school classes went back to the courthouse and it was not until 1894 that a new brick public school was erected.

M. G. Buchanan was ex-officio superintendent of public schools in 1892. Other teachers from then until 1900 included A. W. Hawkins, 1892-1893; J. D. Johnson, 1893-1896; J. W. Evans, 1896-1898; Frank B. St. John and Mrs. S. F. Culberson, 1897-1898; W. I. Stone and A. Soneroad, 1898-1899; and W. D. Jenkins and Cora Johnson, 1899-1900.

The schools were always in financial trouble. Although Midland County paid the first teacher, the money was supposed to have come from taxes collected in Ector County.

School taxes were levied on Feb. 2, 1891 by the newly-organized commissioners court of Ector County. The court ordered school taxes levied on all real and personal property in the county. The taxes were 20 cents on each \$100 valuation in Odessa District No. 1.

This was considered high taxes at the time. Buchanan wrote in 1892, "The present school is taught in the courthouse. Our present levy is clearly illegal," he wrote to the state department of education.

"We had trouble collecting it last year and some of our larger taxpayers have declared their intention to fight this year, so the commissioners decided NOT to levy it," Buchanan wrote.

Buchanan told the state board that school tax election was planned soon, and said:

"Our present school board is giving general satisfaction, and in fact, is the only school we have ever had that has given general satisfaction. Our people are getting more harmonious and I think our school will be a success at present and in the future."

The school tax election finally was held in February, 1894, when 26 voted for the tax and six against it. The rate was set at 20 cents per \$100 of valuation.

George Hogg, the first county attorney of Ector County, gave the land at North Texas and East Sixth for the first brick school house built in 1899. This is the site of the present Hubbard Funeral home.

The brick building was two stories high, with two classrooms on each floor, and with a large central stairway and hall. The building cost \$2,750.

Early spring sandstorms rocked the school house as they did other buildings in town. New teachers coming in from other areas were frightened and sometimes dismissed classes for the day, fearing the building would tumble in on boys and girls.

In 1897 the county was divided into four school districts already designated in the county.

The school districts were Odessa No. 1, Judkins School District No. 2, County Line School, District No 3 and Fairview School District No. 4.

In 1908 Baker School District No. 5 was added. The Judkins school district later was designated as district No. 7. There is no record of the exact boundaries of these later districts.

The Odessa district, however was the only one that had a building, or that levied any taxes for school purposes until the school year 1907-1908.

The Judkins school district began collecting taxes in 1907-1908. It collected \$29. Judkins and Odessa held school for 30 days each. All schools, except Odessa, were un-graded schools. Students entered through the books as they were available.

During the 1907-1908 period the one-room schools at Baker and Fairview were taught 160 days, and the County Line school was taught 49 days. There were no schools reported in districts 2 and 8, or in Middle Wells, District No. 6.

In 1908-1909 the Odessa school district had six teachers, 185 pupils; Fairview had one teacher, 18 pupils; Baker had one teacher, 12 pupils; Judkins had two teachers and 71 pupils; and District No. 7, which began operation that year, had one teacher and 15 pupils.

Baker and Judkins district both built new school buildings in 1908. The Judkins school cost \$3,000; Baker's cost \$450, and the Fairview and County Line buildings were valued at \$350 each.

School taxation was 10 cents per \$100 that year.

In 1909 another brick school building was erected in Odessa. The Odessa school appeared to be the only one that was growing permanently.

By 1913 the Odessa school was in good repair, while the wooden buildings at County Line, Fairview and Judkins were falling into decay. Except for ranch and private schools, the building in Odessa was the only school.

In 1921 all school districts in Ector County were combined into one county district, with the school in Odessa.

Because of the long distances and roundabout-rough roads, it was difficult for small children to travel to Odessa. Ranch schools for the little children remained popular until about 1915, but older children were sent to Odessa, whenever it was possible.

Odessa's new 1909 red brick school house was built on the site of the present Austin Elementary School at North Lee and West 10th. Various additions were made on it until 1938, when it was razed. The first unit of the school cost \$14,000.

The first schools in Odessa taught through the sixth grade. Some older pupils did study in more advanced books, however.

In 1911 the school grades for the first time went through the 10th grade. This constituted a high school and Odessa's first high school graduation was staged in 1911.

By 1921 there were 34 students enrolled in the high school. State department of education recognition, however, had been given credits in English, ancient history, modern history, American history, civics, algebra, plane geometry, solid geometry, Spanish, physiology and hygiene physics, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic and stenography.

The red brick school house was the only school in Odessa until 1929, when the first part of the high school was erected for \$128,313. This building still is in use as Crockett Junior High School, although the older part of the building was renovated and floors braced over a three-year period of summer work from 1955 to 1957.

Development of the oil industry and drilling in the county, followed by the vast industrial growth of today has brought vast changes to the school district since the two buildings of 1929.

Now there are 32 school buildings, 24 elementary, four high schools and four junior high schools. Three junior high departments are also housed in senior high schools. There also are the school bus barns and warehouse buildings; the administration building, and the curriculum building.

The 141 students of 1925 compare to 14,587 in 1956 and 21,450 in 1960.

EARLY DAY SETTLERS IN ECTOR COUNTY & ODESSA

By Mrs. Grace Hendricks

I am interested in "Firsts" and interesting people who have done things 'first'.

I quote the late J. D. Henderson who declared "Odessa was established in the early 80's by a group of white ribboners from the North".

Among those first few were Charles White, J. R. Herkimer, C. W. Rathbun, postmaster, William P. Mudgett. Mr. Mudgett served as commissioner of Prec. No. 1 when Ector County was attached to Midland County. Peter Smythe, Rev. M. A. Daugherty, Dr. S. F. Culbertson were some of the first settlers in Odessa.

These men, in writing the Charter, inserted a clause "Whoever sells liquor on these lots will forfeit title to the property". In later years this was found to be unconstitutional and several saloons were located here.

Another physician, Dr. Ashford from Seattle, Washington settled here and married an eastern woman through a matrimonial agency.

J. W. Amburgey taught the first school. F. M. Tallon opened the first livery stable which was located on the whole block between Grant and Lee, and 2nd and 3rd. He was also a Tax Collector.

Odessa's first college was a poorly constructed building and never completed. The building was used for a short time. At the height of a storm it burned to the ground. Opinion differs as to the cause. Some pioneers believe cowboys burned it for a lark. Others think lightning struck the building. Damage from lightning was prevalent here in those days, killing nine horses and fourteen head of cattle on the night the college burned.

The first church was built by the Baptists and used by all denominations. The whole town turned out to erect this church. Rev. George B. Ely was the first pastor. W. H. Malone, F. E. McGonagill and J. D. Henderson were the builders.

The first barbershop was located in a back room of a saloon. E. F. Dawson was the hair cutter, as they called them as most men wore beards, in the 80's. But when one wanted a hair cut, Mr. Dawson would take them in the back room or out in the back yard. If he liked the man, he didn't charge him, but if he didn't like him, he charged him 15c.

A Mr. P. Nobles settled here in 1882 building a combination house & store on 3rd & Grant where Gerson's Jewelry store is now located.

Carl Akin came to Odessa in 1882 when there were only six houses in town. Mr. Akin served Ector County for many years as a public official.

The late S. R. McKinney, venerable and beloved figure at the court house, came to Odessa in 1884 from Saybrook, Ill. Up to 1949 Mr. McKinney had some of the biggest real estate transactions to ever take place in Odessa.

R. T. "Cotton" Waddell came to Ector County in 1906. He and Mrs. Waddell have lived at their present home, 3rd and Lee since July 1st, 1926. The population at that time was 500 people for Ector and Crane Counties.

Felix Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. George D. Jones, came to Ector County in 1892 and operated a ranch. The Jones boys were well known as Tom and Steve. They were Law enforcement officers in Odessa for many years, also another brother Steve.

Felix opened Jones Brothers General Merchandise store in Judkins. He was also ticket agent for the Texas and Pacific Railway. His store served as a freight depot and also housed the telephone exchange. He was the 3rd postmaster of Judkins, the first being Mr. Hiram "Butch" Graham and signed his petition to the Government. Mr. Jones received his appointment as postmaster from President Teddy Roosevelt.

W. T. "Bill" Henderson was the owner of Odessa's first drugstore in 1907. At that time there was two Dr. Wilsons in Odessa known as Big Doc and Little Doc. They trained Mr. Henderson to dispense prescriptions. A Mr. Lawson was the first pharmacist. His son Ed still lives in Odessa.

In 1918 during the flu epidemic Paul Slatore was called in from his father's ranch to be a pharmacist during the epidemic. Paul is a registered pharmacist.

First appendectomy in Odessa was performed by Dr. Orvil Wilson and Dr. Garland (Little Doc) on Leta Bishop. It caused a lot of excitement and the course in those days an appendix operation was a major operation. The Wilsons moved a white table in Mable Bishop's home, burned sulphur to fumigate, shooed the flies out and closed the doors and windows, then performed the operation. Leta Bishop is still among the living today. Her sister Mable Bishop Kimball still lives here. The second appendectomy was performed on Dr. Garland with Dr. Orvil doing the surgery but with the assistance of Dr. Garland.

The Judkins family were early settlers here. One of the boys, Frank, helped

establishing Judkins. Several names were submitted to the government for post office and on two different occasions they were returned saying that there were towns by those names. Frank Judkins sent in his name of Judkins; hence, that is how Judkins, Texas got its name.

Charlie Judkins, Frank's brother was Ector County Democratic chairman for many years.

Miles Jones, Ector County's probation officer, came to Odessa in 1905 when the west was still the West and a Texan's as good as his word, and a stranger was looked upon as a challenge. But with the coming of the great Permian oilfields something had changed. Perhaps too many strangers appeared, perhaps life became more complex, but any rate things changed. Miles saw drastic change from friendliness. Signs appeared, warning signs to hunters, natives and strangers alike to stay-off not tenants. He became fed up with all this and tacked up a rudely painted sign, to his ranch home, west of Odessa, welcoming one and all to come visit in the best Texas tradition. Scores of total strangers have taken his sign literally and never once has Miles regretted putting up that beaten sign, which says "Come on in Stranger, Miles Jones lives here".

These and many more Early day settlers have made history for Odessa and Ector County.

Of course, the pioneer women and early settlers are not to be forgotten.

Mrs. Stella Calloway, one of the first women to move here in 1886, spent her childhood in a shack with a shed attached, 9 miles from the depot. Her Dad, a sheepherder, drove his wagon all day to reach the little town of Odessa, most generally to order wares from a mail order house. Stella Waddle gave one of the first parties in this area, starting some sort of social life.

Another colorful woman whose hardships have been recounted often was Mrs. Gussie Barrow who was a sharpshooter with a gun, killing deer, rabbits and antelope, the plentiful food being a delicacy.

Living only a few miles from town it often took Mrs. Barrow two days to drive her team in for supplies. Three times a year she set out on the perilous trek. In summer the sand was almost impassable, in winter the frozen earth would retard her progress. She hauled posts and wire to build fences around her range and ate bear grass blossoms. Careless weeds made her salad.

She helped build the Barrow's first shack and when the rooms were added her hammer was among those securing the planks. For three months at a time she didn't glimpse a single person except her family.

Here on the Barrow Ranch she helped build one of the first schools in Ector County. Finally as the settlement grew she organized a sewing club. And I am proud to say that I was one of the newer members of a sewing club she instituted.

Mrs. Barrow is truly a great pioneer and an early day settler.

Elizabeth "Lizzy" Hendricks is another early day settler, having come to Odessa on June 1st, 1901 from Fisher County, with her parents Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Massey, pioneer ranchers.

The trek across Texas was made on horseback, then the fastest mode of travel for the family as they drove a small herd of cattle along the trails.

The late Mr. B. C. Hendricks and Mrs. Hendricks set up housekeeping in a small 4 room house at 111 E. 6th. Mrs. Hendrick had lived on that "corner" since her wedding night. In 1938 after the original home had been enlarged to 9 rooms, the house was razed and a new two-story structure was built. Mrs. Hendrick lived there, "on that corner" fifty-one years. A few years ago it was sold to make room for Odessa progress. She now lives at 1601 N. Sam Houston.

Mrs. Mittie Brown is another old timer. She came to Odessa in 1876. Graham Street in Odessa is named for her father, E. M. Graham.

She and her husband, R. E. Brown received the first marriage license, in 1891 and her daughter, Mrs. Tom McKnight is believed to be the first white child born in Ector County.

We, in Odessa today, owe much gratitude and praise to the early settlers, for it was these people who laid the ground floor for us.

Odessa grew from a little cow town to a metropolitan city. A city never to let an opportunity go by.

We believe our city is destined to be a leader and because of this confidence we are strictly a city of enthusiasm and grateful to the "Early Day Settlers".

1721800

JACK RABBIT ROPING

By Elton Gilliland

The world's first and last jack rabbit roping match was staged as a highly controversial feature of a rodeo at Odessa in 1932.

Some information about this event is available in the court records of the county court of Ector County, and in the old files of newspapers, but anyone interested in the details of the complaints, letters, and litigation that developed over this incident should read the entire story in a pamphlet entitled "Complete Story of the Great Rabbit Roping Wrangle", written by R. H. Shuffler. The pamphlet is available in the Ector County Library. Everything that appears here is pure plagiarism taken from Schuffler's pamphlet.

The Odessa American Legion Post planned a rodeo to be held on Memorial Day in 1932. Some unknown hare-brained publicity genius, in preparing the rodeo program to be released to newspapers, and presumably as a joke, inserted jack rabbit roping as one of the events. When this program was originally carried in the newspapers, it appears that very little attention was given to the jack rabbit roping contest, but an order issued by then Sheriff Reeder Webb prohibiting the event as illegal for obscure and unannounced reasons, fanned the flames of this publicity stunt into a national controversy.

The American Legion in response to Sheriff Webb's order against the jack rabbit roping event, filed a suit in the county court of Ector County to restrain the Sheriff from restraining it. The records of that case indicate that it was tried more out of interest in publicity than justice. A live jack rabbit was introduced into evidence, and the county judge, in an order overflowing with unnecessary remarks, judicially denounced the jack rabbit as a pestiferous rodent, and ordered the Sheriff to desist from interfering with the jack rabbit roping contest.

As stories of the trial made the national press, letters poured into Odessa addressed to the American Legion, Sheriff Reeder Webb, the Mayor of Odessa, and various other dignitaries. In general the letters were violent protests against jack rabbit roping. The first blast came from one Stewart S. Bruce, "and 21 others" of Denver, Colorado. Bruce's letter addressed to the American Legion condemned the planned event as a "cruel and discreditable sport". Mr Bruce invited the Odessa Legion members to put

themselves in the place of the ra-
Nothing of record indicates any Le-
member accepted the invitation. Le-
came in from persons describing th-
selves as members of various hun-
societies in New York, Houston, De-
and other far off places. Only a few s-
pathetic American Legion members
ported the Odessa American Legion
its growing insistence upon holding
contest.

After reading the letters, which
reprinted in Mr. Shuffler's pamphlet,
suspects that the writers of the let-
envisioned a close race as between a
cowboy on a fast horse and an enorm-
wild jack rabbit fresh out of chute 9
the jack rabbit then being roped,
followed by a struggle as between
cowboy and the jack rabbit. There is
clear indication in some of the let-
as to whether the writer opposed j-
rabbit roping out of concern for the
bit, or in opposition to the pleasure
cowboy would have from accomplish-
the feat of roping a jack rabbit. It
also evident that none of the writers e-
stopped to consider as to whether
would be possible to rope a jack ral-
in the first place.

By the time Memorial Day of 1
arrived the ensuing jack rabbit rop-
event had been milked of all possi-
publicity. Also, the Odessa Americ-
Legion by a means that is not clear,
cept that it definitely was not by ropi-
had managed to capture a sufficient nu-
ber of jack rabbits for the contest.

The event was staged in mid-even-
heat. Several contestants, to their last
embarrassment, foolishly made an
tempt by throwing a rope to reduce
jack rabbit to captivity. Neither cow-
nor mount ever got close to the rab-
that was turned loose to be roped. a
not one single rabbit was roped. The j-
rabbit rodeo stock escaped again to t-
prairies to further its progeny, and ja-
rabbit roping as a rodeo event died s-
denly, with the jack rabbit complete-
victorious.

A HISTORY OF ODESSA BUSINESS

by Frank A. White

"Rich land — pure water — the be-
all-the-year climate in the world, a-
no saloons", declared a brochure in 18
published by a Pennsylvania townsi-
company, luring easterners to Odes-
with the vision of a religious and ed-
cational land of Eden. Five years late
the business section still consisted of
a general store, a hardware store and

tel with two sleeping rooms.

Then, in 1960, Odessa led every other y in the nation in total retail sales r household. Thus, in the brief span a few years, Odessa grew from a lonely le cowtown half-way between Fort orth and El Paso into one of the lead- ing industrial and commercial areas of e state.

This, in brief, is the almost unbeliev- le chronicle of business in Odessa. The mpany selling townsites here environ- a rich agricultural and fruit-produc- g area. And, indeed, in the early years en rainfall was more plentiful, an or- ard industry did exist here, shipping t of Odessa peaches, melons, plums d other items of produce. In the in- vening years, early in this century, her prophets had other dreams about e ways in which Odessa would develop. r instance, it was predicted in 1927 at Odessa would become the center of \$50-million potash industry. About the ne time, one real estate promoter im- ed that Odessa might supply the nans market for squab!

But these dreams gave way to drouth d to other vicissitudes which beset y growing and developing area. No e dreamed that under the sandy soil the Permian Basin lay one of the orld's greatest oil fields and that Odessa ould become one of the functioning rve centers of this industry, so vital e economy of our state and of our tion. And it was oil which provided e impetus which drew Odessa into e spotlight of the nation and gave it e base and foundation on which to d.

Looking over the sprawling city from e top floor of one of our tall buildings ay, it is hard to envision on how the tle settlement looked to the first set- ers. The gleaming neon lights of our stling downtown area and the far- ing shopping centers are a far cry from hat our pioneers first saw.

Before regular business properties ere developed here, trading was done t the most basic of economic laws . . . at of supply and demand. When T&P orkers came through here, there were ople to supply them with the food and pplies they required. Beef, Antelope d Buffalo meat were sold to these orkers. Ben Sublett and Bob Trent e named as early purveyors of such tuals to the construction crews. An- her flourishing business attracted the tentation of the federal law enforcement en — that of the illicit traffic in liq- or, sold in obviously large quantities

to the residents of the railroad's "hell- on-wheels" box-cars.

Water has always been at a premium in this area, so one of the first busi- nesses going was the drilling of wells, so vital not only to the residents but also to the cattle which roamed the ran- ches of West Texas.

Following the sale of the town sites in 1891, the business section of Odessa had a small general store owned by W. P. Mudgett; a general store built by Phillip Noble and a Mr. White; and a hotel, consisting of a lobby, a kitchen, and two sleeping rooms. This hotel was also headquarters for the post office and both were operated by R. W. Rathbun our first postmaster.

State archives unearthed in 1938 list- ed Odessa businessmen in the year 1898 as including P. C. Aiken, operator of a general store; J. A. Andrews, a rancher; M. G. Buchannan, another rancher and one of the earliest county officials; R. L. Causey, who owned a blacksmith shop at the corner of First and Grant, near the T&P water tank; Samuel Cross one of the wealthiest of the ranchers; C. L. Jameson, night operator of the rail- road depot; W. P. Mudgett, who later sold his general store and took up ranch- ing; Philip Noble, a merchant whose place of business occupied what is now the site of Carl Sewell Motor Company and who is reputed to have buried large sums of cash somewhere on the property; and Hence Pegues, who was president of the first bank in Odessa, the Citizens National Bank.

Early in 1900, a settler reported that Odessa was a small cowtown with two saloons, three pool halls, an "opry house" a blacksmith shop, a two-by-five jail, two grocery stores, two dry goods stores, two cafes, a meat market and a variety store.

Growth from then on was a slow, er- ratic affair. Business ventures came and went, or stayed and held on through lean years. Joe W. Rice, who came to Odessa in 1908, describes the town at that time as lying within the two-block area between what is now First and Third Streets along Grant. When he arrived, to open his blacksmith shop, the town consisted of Branch Isbells general store; a barber shop; a saloon which was soon to be converted into a pool hall; a livery stable; the Citizen's National Bank and Jess Frame's printing office. These busi- nesses lay on the west side of Grant. On the east side of the street where Blank- enship's grocery store; the railroad de- pot; a meat market; Herkimer's general

store; the post office; Barnes Brothers Hardware store and Henderson's Drug Store. Rice opened his blacksmith shop near the site of what is now the New Plaza Theatre on Second Street, east of Grant. Rice, incidentally, opened Odessa's first motion picture theatre, with a hand-operated crank and carbide lamps; he also was the first Odessan to do repair work on the automobiles which began to be seen on the streets just before World War 1.

The town continued its meager existence for many years. Drouth, depression and other reverses slowed but did not halt its growth. Then, in the mid-twenties oil was discovered in the area. The Population began to grow, and, with it, businesses moved into Odessa from surrounding areas. Possibly the first store here devoted exclusively to clothing was Nash Tucker's which opened in 1927. The Model Shop followed in 1932 and Winkler's in 1935. These businesses have all stayed here and, like so many others, have within recent years moved into new buildings north of their earliest locations. The Elliott Hotel opened in 1927.

From there on in, the town rapidly developed into one of the fastest growing cities in the nation. The population of the city finally topped 80,000 in 1960, the year it led the nation in retail sales per household. As the population grew and the residential areas sprang up in every direction from downtown, shopping centers grew and developed to take care of this expansion. The town now boasts five major shopping areas in addition to the downtown area, and the stores represent some of the newest, most modern to be found anywhere. Still exhibiting the spirit of the original settlers in opening new territory, Odessa's merchants today are current with and, in many cases, ahead of the latest developments in retail merchandising.

HISTORY OF BANKING IN ODESSA *Ernest M. Schur*

There was a time in Odessa's history when you could have "gone to the bank" to buy a paper of pins, a saddle blanket, a jug of coal oil or a burial casket. Between 1897 and 1902, B. Blankenship & Co., General Merchandise, operated the only "bank" in town. In those days, if your credit was good, you paid your bills once or twice a year.

Officially, Odessa's first bank was the Odessa National, opened in 1902 and closed in 1903. Charter president was a

Mr. Van Tyle, the cashier a Mr. as.

Odessa was without a bank then until 1906, when Hence Pegues and others organized the Citizens National Bank at the corner of what is now Second and Grant. Pegues was the president and E. S. Martin cashier. F. Bates, then Henry Pegues, assumed the presidency. Wickliffe Skinner, Henry Pegues, in their turns, bank cashier.

During 1907 the Western National Bank was organized with Tom G. Hendrick president and George B. Bladock cashier. But the panic of 1907 for consolidation of the two banks under name Citizens National.

Hendrick and Skinner, as president and cashier, respectively, opened doors of the Odessa National Bank October 28, 1925. With the coming of the depression, the Odessa National merged with Citizens National on August 1, 1930. Hunter Strain figured in the Citizens National's final transaction by drawing his last \$2800. Henry P. paid him off in gold and silver, followed him to the door, and turned the key.

Odessa's modern age of banking began fifty weeks later, when the First National Bank of Odessa, with capital of \$100,000 and surplus of \$5,000 opened business on Saturday, April 2, 1932. Dauntless Tom Hendrick was the Citizens National's charter president. Old kick Wickliffe Skinner was vice-president. W. B. Rees cashier, Joe Hamilton assistant cashier, Joe Hamilton assistant cashier. Directors were Ewell McKim, R. T. Waddell and W. H. Rhodes. Odessa's population was a little over 20,000. The bank opened where the Citizens National had closed, at Second and Grant. Within a year, deposits had leaped to \$50,000.

In 1937 John D. Mitchell and Charles E. Maedgen, Sr., both of Lubbock, Texas, purchased control of the First National. The bank was moved to 309 N. Grant. Two years later, Mitchell bought out Maedgen's interest and retained control until sale of his shares to the present ownership in January of 1954.

H. H. "Pat" Simmons joined the First National as president, and on Saturday, June 25, 1949, operations were moved to 415 North Grant "offering many new and improved services: 1,000 additional safe deposit boxes, drive-in teller service, double-size night depository . . ."

Next to open was the First State Bank which was capitalized for \$100,000 with a surplus of \$10,000 and undivided profits of \$15,000. H. H. Beagle was named chairman of the board, James S. F. president, Charles Perry executive vice

ident, B. T. Cardwell, cashier, and
le V. West, assistant cashier. On the
rd of Directors besides Beagle and
were: George Elliot, C. M. Smith,
Hunt, Glenn Allen, C. W. McCol-
Conrad Dunagan and Tom Davis.
th and Hunt are still members of
Board.

he First State opened April 23, 1945,
he Elliot Hotel Building, where As-
Clothiers is located today. It was
ed to its present modern location at
corner of Fourth and Lee in April of
1960.

"We're pleased with our progress,"
es the now-president Charles Perry.
ere could we have chosen a better
munity for growth?"

he American Bank of Commerce
ned at the corner of 7th and Texas
ch 16, 1956, with a record first day's
osits of more than three million dol-
Capital was \$200,000, surplus \$200,-
and undivided profits of \$50,000. Di-
ors were: E. G. Rodman, A. C. Bas-
M. O. Borning, Jr., R. O. Canon, W.
Noel, I. W. Lovelady, R. W. Sewell,
late M. H. McWhirter, and Lester
Morton, president.

he American Bank of Commerce
e a new high to Odessa's skyline with
opening of the 12-story American
k of Commerce Building on August
1960. Present managements remains
ntially unchanged with the exception
t McWhirter's seat on the board is
occupied by John Ben Shepperd,
that Derrell Henry is now president.

Odessa's first "suburban" bank, the
ional Bank of Odessa, came into be-
on Friday, January 23, 1959, at the
ner of East 8th and Echo. Stockhold-
oversubscribed the initial issue four
five times. Actually, there were more
spective stockholders than stock, so to
ak, and sales were closed with 180
kholders.

Capital structure included \$500,000 —
0,000 in capital, \$2000,000 in surplus,
0,000 in undivided profits. There were
directors. Ernest Schur was name in-
ve president. Arvel W. Boyd was
cted executive vice-president, Kenneth
aper, cashier. Jack Logan replaced
ord as exec. V. President when Boyd
named chief executive officer of a
v bank at Azle, Texas, in September
1960.

The First National moved into its
sent 8-story building in July of this
r.

How well has banking prospered in
Odessa? The answer is found in the fig-
s below, excepted from the "call" of
the 30, 1961.

COMBINED TOTALS:

Resources

Cash & Exchange	34,338,891.86
Loans & Discountts	31,182,296.32
Other Assets	1,955,030.36
Total Resources	67,476,218.54

Liabilities

Capital Accounts	6,018,656.48
Deposits	61,320,562.06
Other Liabilities	137,000.00
Total Liabilities	67,476,218.54



FIRST NATIONAL BANK



AMERICAN BANK OF COMMERCE

ODESSA, ECTOR COUNTY 1961

By John Ben Shepperd
President Chamber of Commerce

Odessa is a city of wealth, both in natural resources and in its people, and its economy is a vigorous one. In the past 75 years it has grown from a small West Texas settlement into a thriving city.

Odessa & Ector County led the nation last year in retail sales per household, amounting to \$5,887. Retail sales in 1959 amounted to \$5,337 per household, while in 1958 they totaled \$5,042. These figures depict the steady economic growth which this city has enjoyed. But the greatest asset to Odessa is the unfailing courtesy, friendliness and good humor of its citizens. We even have three welcome services for newcomers.

Ector County was one of 49 counties throughout the United States where the number of inhabitants increased by 100 per cent or more between the 1950 and 1960 census . . . up 116 per cent from 42,102 to 90,995, a gain of 48,893.

Each Odessan is wealthy - not individually, but collectively. We measure our wealth in terms of each person's share in the total. So every citizen owns 1/12 of an oil well and 1/880 of a gas well - producing 396 barrels of oil and 273 MCF of natural gas for each of us in 1960; 1/14 of a cow - 1/560 of a jackass; 2/78 jackrabbits -; 1/3000 of a hog; 1/18 of a sheep and 1/250 of a horse (front).

Last year each Odessan spent \$181.32 in buildings to make his community bigger and more attractive, and statistics show that our construction costs are \$1.50 per square foot under the national average. Only eleven other Texas cities topped this figure in building permits.

Odessans are born 4 1/2 times as fast as they die, and that's pretty discouraging to Midland. In fact, Odessa is the healthiest place in the world to live. We have to go across the state line into New Mexico to get sick. A typical example is the yankee who homesteaded a ranch here 75 years ago. When he moved here, he was crippled and had a glass eye. Oil was discovered on his ranch and now he has not only stopped limping, but he can even see a little out of that glass eye:

Odessa, by and large, is a young man's town, which probably has a lot to do with its rapid growth. Our median age is 24.8, the youngest in the nation. A baby is born each year for every 25 persons,

and one out of every 250 persons is one of the lowest death rates in the nation. It is easy to get people to be in Odessa, but it is hard to get them to leave it - even with our five employment agencies. Odessa is so much like home they don't see the point of moving on. Of course, there is always the element of doubt as to which way they'd go.

Odessa has a total of 25,500 households. The average income per household is \$7,322 per year, which is \$1 above the national average. Last year there was \$14,687,266.00 in building permits, 21,318 water connections, 21 sewer connections, 23,499 gas connections, 26,515 electric connections and 36 telephone connections. The total net building income for the city of Odessa is \$202,699,000.

To boil this factual report down to a simple formula - In Odessa men are men and women are women - - and I don't want to improve on a situation like this. Or as the Old Maid said, "Who's trying to improve on it? I just want to get on it."

It's refreshing to be one of the nine thousand laughing, bragging characters who make up Odessa and Ector County. Odessans continue to amaze the rest of the country with their energy and expensive living. We are working 7,424 oil and gas wells, running 2,090 businesses, keeping \$73,364,963.43 on bank deposits in four banks. Of course, our losses are too. We watch 75 per cent of our rainfall flow away with no effort to preserve it. Many acres of valuable top soil blow away each year, but since most of the blows through Odessa, we have a character to recapture it. It makes us feel like better Americans, since we've always heard that everyone should have a little soil of his own . . . even though it is his nose, eyes, and hair.

But we have a lot of fun. We eat more than our share of the 140 million pounds of fish caught in Texas each year despite the fact that the nearest lake is 85 miles away. In 1959 (latest available figures) we had the largest per capita boat ownership of any city in Texas. We swim in five public pools, play tennis in 39 courts and recreate in 27 parks (2 acres).

We manage to stay pretty busy, too. We're running about 2,090 corporations, private business establishments, including 79 shoeshine stands, 6 health studios, 3 toy stores, 42 help-yourself laundries, 2 detective agencies, and 4 diaper services. We send more than 100 dog heads each year to Austin to be examined for rabies, indict some 288 fellow citizens and commit about 3,485 major and minor

nes (In 1960 Odessa was the only city in Texas between 50,000 and 100,00 that showed a decrease in crime); pluck more than 129,321 tourists and convention guests. We've made some progress in the 75 years; we no longer raise cotton because we find it easier to pick a tourist than to pick cotton.

Two thousand nine hundred and sixty Odessans are working for the government on the public payroll. Each person in Odessa uses 223 gallons of water daily for domestic purposes, but this doesn't include the water it takes to make the beer consumed by those 2,960 on the public payroll.

The average Odessa married woman is 3 years younger than her husband, and lives 6 years longer, so the average widowhood is 9 years. Odessa widows outnumber the widowers 4 to 1 and theachelors 2 to 1, which makes the widows rather friendly. 10 per cent of all our

women over 14 are working nowadays and they make up 36 per cent of the automobile drivers in the city. Seems like more than that when you get out on the street, despite the fact that we have 56,225 vehicles registered.

A total of 11,232 citizens in Odessa have a college degree and 1,267 more are attending college, and 21,514 children attend our 4 high and 31 primary schools.

Taken all together, these figures show that Odessans are not ticking, but clicking; and there is nothing confidential about the way we're doing it. We're tooting our own horn and running in high gear, and the country had better clear the way. It isn't hard to describe Odessa just come to the place where people are working, praying, building, planning and growing, and bragging about it - - that's ODESSA!



This aerial photograph provides a bird's-eye-view of the new butadiene and synthetic rubber plants in Odessa. The plants, first of their kind ever built in the gas and oil-rich West Texas area. In the foreground is The General Tire and Rubber Co. polymer plant which will produce up to 50,000 tons of synthetic rubber per year. In the background is the 50,000-ton-per-year plant of El Paso Natural Gas Products Company.



1958 Permian Basin Oil Show Ector County Coliseum

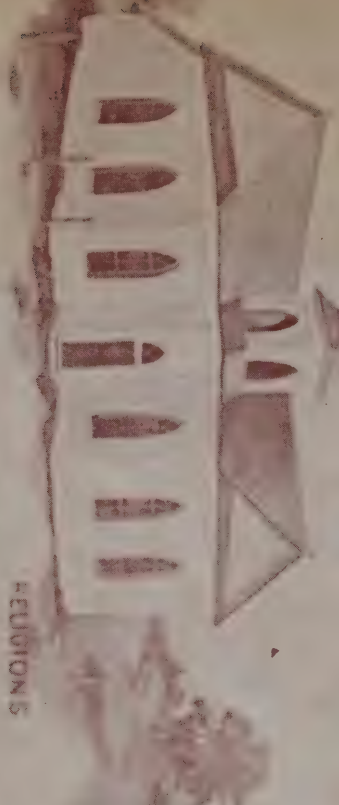
Biennial affair attracts over 200,000 people during a four-day exhibition in excess of 500 exhibits representing all phases of the petroleum industry during this show.

To J. S. McNeel, Jr., Great Western Loan & Trust Co. for editorial work and West Texas Office Supply our printer and Furrs Cafeteria for the cover we extend our appreciation and gratitude.





COURTS OF LAW



REGIONS



BUSINESS

ARID WILDERNESS



RAILROADERS



HOME STEADERS

4832

